

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE MAINSTREAM?

A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
IMPLEMENTATION AND INTEGRATION WITHIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

AUGUST 2017

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful research participants who are truly remarkable in their relentless commitment to education and justice.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

RJE	Restorative Justice in Education
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
CBO	Community Based Organization
CPS	Chicago Public Schools
VOYCE	Voices of Youth In Chicago Education
CCSR	Consortium on Chicago School Research
OSS	Out-of-School Suspensions
ISS	In-School Suspensions
RJ	Restorative Justice
BARJ	Balanced and Restorative Justice
OSEL	Office of Social and Emotional Learning
SERP	Suspensions and Expulsions Reduction Plan
SCC	Student Code of Conduct
GFSA	Gun-Free Schools Act
SSA	Safe Schools Act
APA	American Psychological Association
LGBTQ	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer
CASEL	Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
IBARJ	Illinois Balanced and Restorative Justice
REAL Justice	Restore, Empower, Advance, Love Justice
CHAMPS	Conversation, Help, Activity, Movement, Participation, Success
DSC	Dignity in Schools
BAM	Becoming a Man
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports
BHT	Behavioral Health Teams
RP	Restorative Practices
CTU	Chicago Teachers Union
ICJIA	Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
LOIR	Levels of Organizational Integration Rubric
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OS&S	Office of Safety & Security
SQRP	The School Quality Rating Policy
DCFS	Department of Child and Family Services
IB	International Baccalaureate
IMPACT	Instructional Management Program and Academic Communication Tool

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It feels surreal to be almost done and dusted with a program that has proven to challenge me in so many ways than one. Despite the odds I feel triumphant and confident to move forward and I have so many people to thank for this end product!

My family, my constant pillar of affection and strength, can't thank you enough. Karthik, how can I describe in so many words what an unbelievable source of support you have been to me. My manic outbursts were met with unflinching care and big bear hugs, lest I forget your analogy, "This is a marathon and you've got to keep going". You let me finish this marathon even though I'm a sprinter! I am so grateful and lucky to have you in my life. Mom & Dad, you are the kind of parents that I hope to be one day. I am who I am today because of the tremendous, unrelenting encouragement I have received from you. I will always lean on your guidance and affection. Arjun & Barkha, you two are just adorable. Thanks for lending a kind, listening ear to my maddening trials and tribulations throughout the length of my program. Appa, Amma & Jillu- my newfound family, thank you very much for all your warmth and reassurance, it has been most endearing to receive. A big shout out to my big fat Indian extended family who cheered me on from afar! I would like to give a special nod to my Namita Bhua. Bhua, you literally planted this research seed in me and you continue to inspire me every single day.

My awesome sauce friends, thank you for all the laughs, the clinks and the gorging that helped me stay sane for the past 6 years! It started out with the 5021 troop- Kevin, Feli, Harini and my beloved Jersey. My Chicago family- Pooja, Shruti, Khoshnam, Mike, Rohit, Harleen, Japjit, Mandeep, G-man, AC, Sori, Jaeseung and Sanyuktha. My wonderful cohort- Alex, Nate, Billie, Prossie and AMJ- I am so proud of us! My outside of Chicago friends- Ajay, Rimple, Shagun, Gayu, Shikha and

Nivedita. Khosh, my sister, partner-in-crime, you made my time in Chicago so glorious...I can't thank you enough.

To my wonderful committee members. Waldo, my chair, thank you so much for guidance and positive affirmation especially during some particularly arduous times. I've learnt a lot from you professionally and will continue to lean on you for strength and advice moving forward. Jennifer thanks for sparking my interest in the field of organizations! You are the faculty member that I aspire to be. Your incisive thoughts, your constant positivity and terrific advice beyond the dissertation were most appreciated. Elizabeth, you have been incredibly kind and assuring throughout the dissertation process. I'm so glad to have had the opportunity to meet with you, your passion and drive in the field of restorative justice is infectious!

I would also like to thank other members of the SSA/University of Chicago faculty who have helped me at various junctures of the program- Mark, Rob, Julia, Amy, Neil, Shipra, and Jessica. The administrative staff at SSA, truly the backbone of SSA- thanks for your smiles, terrific assistance and open door policy! It made meandering through the PhD a lot less daunting. Special thanks to Tanya Hines, the kindest soul around!

Finally, I am extremely grateful to all my research participants who really opened up their doors and minds to me. I have been very humbled by my data collection experience and have learnt so many tremendous qualities from my participants- tenacity, passion, grit and commitment. I hold them in very high regard and sincerely hope that my project has done justice to bringing their voices to the fore.

ABSTRACT

The study uses a qualitative comparative case study design to study the adoption, implementation and integration of restorative justice in education (RJE) in public high schools as a remedy to the growing school-to-prison pipeline. Such zero-tolerance, exclusionary policies that dominate schools today adopt punitive tactics towards handling matters of conflict and justice within schools. The retributive approach is gaining harsh criticism as it disproportionately impacts minority youth and criminalizes student behavior. RJE along with other Social Emotional Learning (SEL) approaches is gaining traction within schools as a means of humanizing school environments and emphasizing a student centered perspective. Drawing on human service organizational theoretical frameworks, namely institutional entrepreneurship, innovation implementation, ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation and diffusion of innovation, this study seeks to expand knowledge on RJE by providing a more critical examination of whether RJE has moved from a more marginal status towards becoming mainstream or standardized practices at schools. The study has a particular focus on the partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) many high schools form in order to carry out this work.

The study adopts a two-phased purposively sampled approach conducted over a period of a year. The primary mode of data collection comprised of conducting face-to-face semi-structured interviews with program managers of CBOs (n=10), central district personnel (n=3), which constitutes the first phase, and multiple school personnel across four high schools (n=60), which constitutes the second phase. Using the AtlasTi software, verbatim transcripts of audio-recorded interviews were analyzed using an inductive and deductive coding scheme. Additional sources such as school discipline

data, observations, contract documents and other media sources were examined for data triangulation purposes.

The findings highlight the critical role played by CBOs to bring about RJE adoption at both the policy level as well as the local schools. However post RJE reform at the policy level, the role and the agency of the CBOs have diminished as evidenced in my findings. Despite the RJE seed being planted by CBOs at schools, the principals make the ultimate adoption decisions about catalyzing RJE reform within schools. Successful implementation of RJE within schools includes three main factors: leadership, effective communication on RJE programming and invigorating a positive school culture. Schools which diffuse and institutionalize RJE as a part of SEL compared to schools that integrate RJE as a part of discipline are more likely to be contributing to the care ethos and nurturing healthy school cultures. However, such a contribution has not redefined the notion of policing and justice within schools, as the study finds traces of the retributive approach still operational within these schools.

Using the various organizational theoretical frameworks I argue that there are five critical aspects that have come in the way of RJE reform dole out. Firstly, there is a discrepancy in RJE policy vis a vis practice because the CPS Central District Office is using coercive tactics and mandating the use of RJE within schools, which has resulted in resistance to RJE. Secondly, precarity of school-CBO partnerships are playing out largely because of resource dependency issues of CBOs who have lost their ability to effect change beyond adoption. Thirdly, findings highlight the constant state of urban flux in operation at these schools such as drastic leadership changes, staff attrition, neighborhood gentrification amongst others, which has made embedding RJE into the fabric of schools very challenging. Principals have emerged as being very crucial to the RJE change process, since they are contending with both policy level actors as well as

CBOs to continue to inspire their own personnel to implement and institutionalize RJE reform. Finally, especially at the local school level personnel appear to be more misinformed about the key components of RJE, thus training efforts need to be reoriented with fidelity and quality control in mind. Thereby, RJE has definitely moved away from the margins but it is still not the mainstream practice at schools. RJE has failed to upkeep its promise and potential especially towards marginalized, communities of color.

Greater district engagement, continued CBO agency as well as sustained programmatic endeavors spearheaded by principals at the local school level are important for RJE to pose as a true alternative to punitive sanctions rather than being coopted by the retributive approach. Therefore, my study pushes the field of human service delivery, in that instead of focusing on the outcomes of RJE, per se, it looks at the process of and challenges in implementing this innovation, providing insight into improving contracting relations between partners and questions the sustainability of reform efforts within urban environments.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the U.S, the practices and discourses of the juvenile justice system have made their way into many schools, leading to the criminalization of behaviors such as increased suspensions, expulsions, school-based arrests (Kupchik, 2010; Nolan, 2011)- giving rise to the school-to-prison pipeline (Kim, Losen, & Hewitt, 2010). The school-to-prison pipeline is defined as a, “confluence of exclusionary educational policies in under-resourced public schools and a punitive juvenile justice system that fails to provide education and mental health services for most at-risk students and drastically increases the likelihood that these children will end up with a criminal record rather than a high school diploma” (Kim, Losen & Hewitt, 2010, p. 4). While zero tolerance is affecting a greater diversity of communities than ever before, due to continuing biases, disparate treatment, and systemic inequities, students of color are particularly harmed by these policies and practices (Advancement Project, 2010). As a result, national and local policymakers have called on schools to reduce the use of exclusionary disciplinary practices—those that remove students from the classroom (Stevens et al., March 2015)

This issue is especially blatant in the City of Chicago. Chicago’s youth violence epidemic is concentrated in a relatively small number of communities. During the 2011-12 school year, 324 Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students were suspended and 29 arrested everyday, hailing largely from the South and West sides of Chicago¹ (Voices of Youth In

¹ These are communities in Chicago that have a larger proportion of minority populations and are more economically disadvantaged compared to the North side of the city, thereby highlighting the issues of race and class and how they intersect with where you live in Chicago.

Chicago Education (VOYCE) Report, 2011; Lewis & Kaba, 2014). A March 2015 Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) research report indicates, that the out-of-school suspension (OSS) rates in CPS have gone down from 23 percent in 2008-09 to 16 percent in 2013-14 school years (Stevens et.al, March 2015). However the OSS rates are strongly related to students' prior test scores, their race, and their gender. The increase in in-school suspensions (ISS) is counter-balancing the decline in OSS. The report also indicates that most suspensions in high schools are a result of student defiance rather than violence or illegal behavior. Another September 2015, CCSR report on understanding differences in discipline practices across CPS schools showed that African American students are about three times more likely to be suspended than Latino students, and more than four times likely to be suspended than white or Asian students. Also, boys are much more likely to be suspended than girls of the same race/ethnicity. This suspension demographic reflects that students who hail from the poorest neighborhoods, with the most vulnerable and low-achieving backgrounds, tend to attend schools that rely on exclusionary disciplinary practices with school climates that are least conducive for learning (Sartain, et.al, September 2015).

Past research indicates suspensions and expulsions are associated with a higher likelihood of a failure to graduate on time and dropping out of school (Advancement Project, 2010). Data also shows the economic impact of punitive justice; for example in 2011, it cost about \$90,000 to incarcerate a young person in Illinois for a year, more than six times the cost of providing a public education for a year (Lewis & Kaba, 2014). Policy statements from the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Psychological Association, and American Bar Association have come out strongly against the over-use of suspensions, noting negative educational, social, and health consequences that are perceived to result from the punishments themselves (Sartain, et.al, September 2015).

An alternative to exclusionary punitive school polices gaining international popularity is restorative justice in education (RJE). According to Zehr (2002; p.37), “Restorative justice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible.” It challenges us to think differently about what effective means, and is founded on a set of values and principles that redefine the meaning of policing and justice beyond strategies, tactics, and programs (Umbreit et al., 2005). RJE approaches reflect multiple program model variations- victim-offender dialogue, family group conferencing, peace-making or sentencing circles, youth panels or neighborhood accountability boards, and community conferencing (Bazemore & Schiff, 2005). As of March 2006, at least 17 states, have included the balanced and restorative justice (BARJ) approach including Illinois in the purpose clauses of their juvenile court, seeking to balance the needs of all the parties affected by the crime by focusing on accountability, community safety and competency development of youth offenders (Bazemore, 1998; Griffin, Szymanski & King, 2006; Siegel & Welsh, 2011).

RJE practices seek to strengthen the school social climate, replace punitive discipline with pro-social education, build relationships between students and school staff, better integrate students who misbehave in the school environment, and create a climate of inclusiveness where students perceive the school’s authority to be fairly imposed (Bazemore & Schiff, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2002). Figure 1 provides a comparison of punitive (traditional) and restorative approaches in schools. Within schools, system-wide implementation of RJE practices is a long process and can take three to five years, depending on the size and scope of the school district (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005). However RJE practitioners have been warned about succumbing to pressures that may threaten the integrity

and future of the field wherein the cooptation of RJE programs into the mainstream justice machine; the rapid growth of programs that are “restorative” in name only, added as a fad or trend, is a growing concern (Johnstone, 2002).

Traditional/ Punitive Response	Restorative Response
School Rules are broken	People and relationships are harmed
Justice focuses on establishing guilt	Justice identifies needs and responsibilities
Accountability=punishment	Accountability=understanding impact and repairing harm
Justice directed at the offender; victim is ignored	Offender, victim and schools all have a direct role in the justice process
Rules and intent outweigh whether outcome is positive or negative	Offender is responsible for harmful behavior, repairing harm and working towards positive outcomes
Limited opportunities for expressing remorse or making amends	Opportunity given to make amends and express remorse

Figure 1: A comparison of punitive and restorative justice responses in schools
 (Source: <http://www.aplsschools.org/stay-informed/what-school-discipline-should-look-like/>)

A lot of the past literature on RJE has primarily focused on impact and outcome assessment of various RJE practices. Very few studies have focused on the human service organizations that are receiving RJ practices, i.e., in this case public schools. Organizations are basic to youth development practice and programming, they act as their host, cage and promise (Roholt, et al., 2013). As hosts and homes, schools receive programs, services and initiatives, which are often sites for myriad programming. Schools can also act as cages, wherein certain youth programming is kept viable beyond their expiration date and schools also block innovative and responsive practices from gaining the necessary support to grow. Schools allow certain programming to thrive and flourish, thereby allowing the programming to live up to its promise (Roholt, et al., 2013). Thus it is important to give scholarly attention to schools, “their structure, ethos, culture, social organization, and processes as hosts to

youth-serving programs. Without schools, these programs would be homeless” (Roholt et al., 2013, p.14).

Parallely it is important to understand that schools do not operate in a vacuum. The larger institutional environment in which schools are embedded have become vastly more complex (Hasenfeld, 2010). Major socio-demographic changes and economic transformations through waves of immigration and migration have altered the way schools need to adjust their services to meet diverse needs, especially for students hailing from urban impoverished communities (Logan & Mallenkopf, 2003). Schools have to often adapt to major technological changes that affect their own service technologies (Hasenfeld, 2010). For instance, there is an increasing expectation that schools ought to adopt practices based on evidence-based research (Gambrill, 2006). In addition, the political and institutional environments of schools have seen alterations from a welfare regime to one that focuses on individual responsibility (Somers & Block, 2005). Schools are increasingly under pressure to collaborate in order to enhance their performance. With a broader school reform movement, an overarching emphasis on academic accountability and improvement, and the interconnected and intractable problems that many low income urban students face, motivates the push for collaboration at schools (Wang & Boyd, 2000). Schools respond to the dynamic institutional environment by developing new organizational forms as well as adapting existing ones (Hasenfeld, 2010).

Therefore utilizing the organizational lens, the current study aims to fill the gaps in literature on RJE by focusing on schools as sites that receive RJ programming, especially to understand what institutional environmental and organizational supports, and legitimacy are necessary for RJ to prosper. Recognizing that RJE is a paradigm that envisions broader systemic social change, RJE interventions aim at transforming the ways in which schools

approach and address conflict. Existing literature indicates that adopting this sort of service technology will depend, in part, on an organizational culture that supports risk-taking and experimentation, a visionary leadership, and internal structure marked by specialization, professionalization and diversity (Bartunek & Moch, 1987; Zaltman & Duncan, 1977). Transforming the mindset associated with traditional discipline, to one associated with restorative practices whilst being mindful of the changes occurring in the broader institutional environment that inadvertently affects school culture is critical to the achievement of a culture change within schools.

Within Chicago, community-based organizations (CBOs) have played a very critical role with regards to shaping RJ policy at the CPS district level as well as working more directly with assisting individual CPS schools to implement and infuse RJE. With unrelenting pressure from CBOs who primarily represent minority community concerns regarding the district's excessive use of punitive disciplinary policy, in February 2014, the CPS Office of Social and Emotional Learning (OSEL)² announced a CPS Suspensions and Expulsions Reduction Plan (SERP). The primary motive of the plan was to revise the Student Code of Conduct (SCC)³ in order to limit the use of OSS and emphasize upon a restorative approach (CPS Office of College & Career Success, June 2014). The district is also

² Social and Emotional Learning works with schools to establish multi-tiered systems of support for students' social, emotional and behavioral development. OSEL ensures school-based staff use the most effective strategies to foster a safe learning climate and maximize student engagement and achievement
(Source:http://cps.edu/About_CPS/Departments/Pages/Departments.aspx#S)

³ The SCC was established by the CPS Board to create a consistent set of expectations for student behavior and applies to actions of students during school hours, before and after school, while on school property, while traveling in vehicles funded by the Board, at all school-sponsored events, and while using the CPS Network or any computer, Information Technology Device, or social networking website, when the actions affect the mission or operation of CPS (CPS IMPACT Verify Report, n.d.)

simultaneously expanding its SEL umbrella by incorporating RJE practices as a part of SEL, siphoning greater funds and resources towards the same (CASEL Report, March 2015).

Till date, the most common medium of RJE implementation across CPS schools is to form partnerships with these CBOs, since they are viewed as RJ experts and provide technical assistance to schools⁴. Payne (2008) notes that external partnership expertise coming into demoralized schools with wrong packaging may almost be rejected immediately. A learning process may be necessary to get schools to the point where they can accept expertise irrespective of how its packaged (Payne, 2008). Hence the study examines under what conditions do such partnerships survive and potentially thrive and, in what manner are such partnerships affecting the way RJ unfolds within schools. With the CPS Central District more recently backing the rapid expansion of RJ, the current study provides further impetus to recognize the manner in which policy change affects RJE, i.e., is RJE moving away from its marginal status within exclusionary disciplinary practices towards becoming mainstream non-exclusionary practices as resonated in the alterations to the SCC. Through this one can observe that there are multiple actors- CBOs, the district and individual schools containing multiple rungs of personnel, coming into the frame with regards to RJE implementation and integration across schools.

In addition, urban flux at schools, which intersects with race, class and geography, is also important to be analyzed with regards to RJE dole out. Within CPS there is a known variance in the amount of resources that are allocated to schools across different geographies especially owing to the racial makeup of larger communities in which schools are embedded

⁴ There are historical precedents as to why CBOs have known to become RJ experts and shall be substantiated in further chapters.

(Payne, 2008). In school spaces, especially lower-tier schools that harbor high levels of pervasive distrust, lack collective responsibility and are perceived as being less safe could impact the utilization of financial and technical resources even when they become available (Payne, 2008). New programs, policies or initiatives that strive to build an idea of “contrived collegiality” (Hargreaves, 1991) are often viewed with skepticism by problematizing the use of power and authority. This is because often the administration in the garb of democratic pretense imposes school reform efforts onto their staff, leaving little room for gauging a fit with the school’s overall social infrastructure. In addition, the city of Chicago does not provide all students with equivalent opportunities to learn, however tends to judge all its students using standardized testing norms. Ferguson’s (2003) research suggests that race, ethnicity, and class impact teacher perception and teacher behavior as expressed in low expectations, low demands, listless teaching, and inequitable distribution of resources, human and social. Hence, given the historically weak performance of most reform efforts and the growing resistance and generalized belief in program failures, I am trying to gauge the sustainability of resource intensive RJE efforts to shift paradigms for discipline and justice in schools. Such efforts necessitate resources to be reallocated redistributed and, must strive to address the gender and racial diversity needs of students these efforts are striving to serve (Payne, 2008).

Given this background, the current study using a qualitative comparative case study design drawing on major human service organizational theoretical and conceptual frameworks, seeks to address the following three research questions:

- (1) In what manner is RJE being adopted at both the CPS central district level and across public high schools?

- (2) What are the specific factors and processes that aid in the successful implementation of RJE across public high schools?
- (3) How and to what degree is RJE getting diffused and integrated across public high schools?

The dissertation is organized into 9 chapters. This introduction is followed by a literature review, Chapter 2, which provides a discussion of the seminal literatures that motivate the empirical work. Chapter 3 specifically draws attention to the growth of RJ within CPS. Chapter 4 presents the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide my analysis. Chapter 5 highlights the multiple comparative case study methodological approach utilized in the study to collect and analyze my data. Chapter 6, the first of the 3 empirical chapters explicates the RJE adoption process whilst emphasizing the role of CBO-school partnerships, and discusses the central district perspective regarding RJE. Chapter 7 seeks to address the second research question and focuses on a comparative analysis of the factors and processes affecting successful implementation of RJE. Chapter 8 discusses the third research question and focuses on a comparative analysis of the level of diffusion and integration of RJE across the four school contexts. Lastly, Chapter 9 serves as a discussion chapter, and highlights key findings in the context of existing literature, exploring the implications of this dissertation study for RJE implementation and integration processes within public schools. Chapter 9 also discusses the limitations to the study and its implications for future research and practice.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Most schools embark on the implementation of RJE without being aware of what effective implementation looks like and without awareness of the complexities of change management (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). The implementation approach to RJE needs to be comprehensive and multi-faceted, because the way RJE is implemented distinguishes it as ‘the way we do things around here’, versus an occasional tool used by schools when a child is in trouble. These aspects are intimately linked to the sustainability of RJE within schools, wherein the focus must be laid on integrating RJE as a part of the overall school culture in comparison to RJE being treated as just another program that schools ought to implement. Implementation and integration of RJE and the way it unfolds within school settings, how members of the school community perceive and embody RJE into their praxis is the focus of the study.

This chapter focuses on a historical overview of RJE and how and why RJE is being viewed as the paradigmatic shift that ought to unfold within schools. More recently, RJE is being understood in conjunction with SEL as a part of non-exclusionary practices within schools, wherein the links between RJE and SEL are emphasized. The nuts and bolts of implementing RJE especially within school settings where staff are overburdened and operating in an environment with competing priorities has been elucidated. Assessing the ways in which RJE has been impactful and effective within schools is also highlighted. At the end, the chapter dovetails into highlighting the gaps in the literature and how this study seeks to expand it, especially with regards to focusing on the process of RJE in lieu of RJE outcomes.

History and Overview of Restorative Justice in Schools

The application of RJE principles and practices in schools is relatively new, with its early-recorded work primarily in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. While RJ was growing in the criminal justice arena, teachers, principals, and counselors began applying practices that had been found effective in the judicial system and adapting them to fit more closely with school contexts (Evans & Vaandering, 2016).

Even as RJE was finding its way into schools, so were zero-tolerance policies. In 1994, the Gun-Free Schools Act (GFSA) was passed in the US, and the Safe Schools Act (SSA) was passed in Canada in 2000. The concept of zero tolerance had been connected to the criminal justice system for years, representing a ‘get tough on crime’ mentality. With the GFSA and SSA, the language of zero-tolerance found its way into schools, creating more draconian approaches to school discipline (Skiba, 2000; Anderson, 2004). As research has shown, however zero tolerance policies not only failed to make schools safer but actually exacerbated unequal treatment (American Psychological Association [APA], 2008) especially amongst students of color, those coming from economically disadvantaged families, those placed in special education, and LGBTQ students (Fenning & Rose, 2007; Gregory, Skiba & Noguera, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

The growing rise in the critique of zero-tolerance policies paved the way for new RJE initiatives in the mid-2000s. For example, in the US, the APA’s 2008 reports argues that zero tolerance policies were not only ineffective but also stood in direct opposition to what was known about child development and best practices in education. More recently, in 2014, the US Department of Justice and the US Department of Education issued a joint statement that exclusionary discipline was being overused and applied in discriminatory ways. They recommend the use of RJE as one of the many alternatives to suspensions and expulsions. In

wake of these shifts, there has been a growing awareness and acceptance of RJ within educational contexts (Evans & Vaandering, 2016).

RJE is a broad term that encompasses a growing social movement to institutionalize peaceful and non-punitive approaches for addressing harm, responding to violations of legal and human rights, and problem solving (Fronius et al., 2016). RJ views crime or harm primarily as a violation of individuals, relationships and communities that "creates obligations to make things right" (Zehr, 1990, p.181). The National Centre for Restorative Approaches in Youth Settings defines RJE as: "...an innovative approach to offending and inappropriate behavior which puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment. A restorative approach in a school shifts the emphasis from managing behavior to focusing on the building, nurturing and repairing of relationships" (Hopkins, 2003, p. 3). According to Zehr (2002) and others (e.g., Karp & Breslin, 2001), RJE is meant to bring together all stakeholders to resolve issues and build relationships (González, 2012) rather than control student misbehavior through punitive approaches.

Restorative responses to misbehavior can take a variety of forms that are centered on several core principles: 1) focus on relationships first and rules second; 2) give voice to the person harmed and the person who caused the harm; 3) engage in collaborative problem solving; 4) enhance personal responsibility; 5) empower change and growth; and 6) include strategic plan for restoration/ reparation (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005). The cumulative effect of these strategies is to offer students, teachers and administrators the possibility of a dignified response to misbehavior and a way to make amends and repair the harm caused. RJE encompasses a synthesis of a variety of terms and approaches such as restorative practices,

restorative discipline, restorative approaches, and restorative measures (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005).

The three overlapping and interdependent components of RJE as depicted in Figure 2, include 1) Creating just and equitable learning environments, 2) Nurturing healthy relationships, and 3) Repairing harm and transforming conflict. These components have grown from core beliefs that people are worthy and relational, and are rooted in values of respect, dignity, and mutual concern (Evans & Vaandering, 2016).

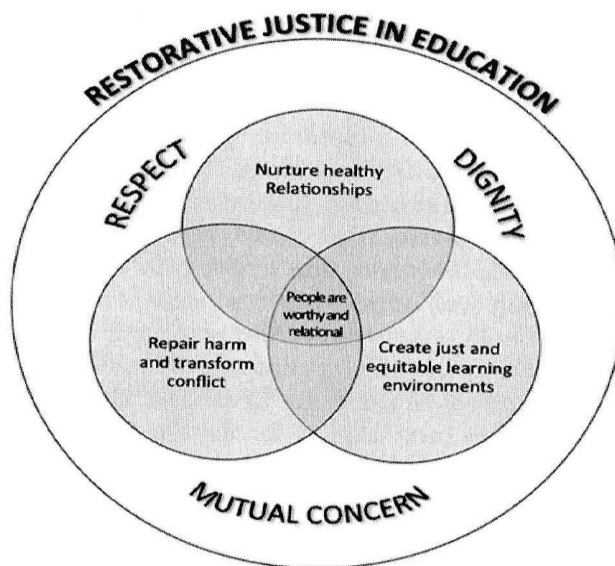


Figure 2: Components of RJE (Source: Evans & Vaandering, 2016)

Link between Restorative Justice & Social and Emotional Learning at Schools

In order for RJE to effect change, schools need to focus on SEL as a part of their RJ approaches, recognizing that students need explicit teaching about how to recognize and respond to emotions (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). Elbertson, Brackett and Weissberg

(2010) draw on the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning's [CASEL]⁵ working definition of SEL as, 'the acquisition of skills including self and social awareness and regulation, responsible decision making and problem-solving, and relationship management' (p.101). The SEL approach integrates competence promotion and youth development frameworks for reducing risk factors and fostering protective mechanisms for positive adjustment (Benson, 2006; Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002; Guerra & Bradshaw, 2008; Weissberg, Kumpfer, & Seligman, 2003). Over time, mastering SEL competencies results in a developmental progression that leads to a shift from being predominantly controlled by external factors to acting increasingly in accordance with internalized beliefs and values, caring and concern for others, making good decisions, and taking responsibility for one's choices and behaviors (Bear & Watkins, 2006). The RJE movement in schools has roots in the peaceable schools concept, as well as movements in conflict resolution education, character education, and emotional literacy; movements that honor an ethos of care within collaborative communities (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005).

To be sustainable, RJE must be understood holistically and operate in tandem with SEL initiatives. RJE is an invitation to create educational cultures that emphasize social engagement rather than social control. As the language of RJE trickled into schools, the mingling of RJE with already existing programs was inevitable and, in many contexts, paved the way for RJE to grow. RJE has been variously described as 'the glue that holds everything together,' a guiding set of principles or a framework for understanding effective school practice (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). For example, Tew (2007) offers guidance on how SEL

⁵ CASEL's mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school (Source: <http://www.casel.org/our-work/>)

needs to be developed at school, whereby teachers become role models for how they expect children to interact and behave in school. As Lahey (2013) states, modeling restorative practices effectively in classrooms is not only ‘standard’ SEL competencies implicitly and explicitly taught, but also students being deliberately taught how the RJ processes work and how to participate effectively.

Several non-exclusionary sanctions that are currently operating at schools, utilize a “carrot and stick” approach to discipline, in which positive behaviors are rewarded and negative behaviors are punished (Wadhwa, 2016). Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) was the most common amongst them (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). Even though RJE and approaches like PBIS strive to improve relationships between teachers and students and strengthen school culture (Dignity in Schools, 2009), RJE is inherently different since it is both a practice and a philosophy, not another behavioral management program (Elliot, as quoted in Zellerer, 2011). Thus it is important for staff to understand how RJE coexists with other SEL non-exclusionary initiatives but at the same time staff should be able to delineate RJE’s unique value from such initiatives, in order for RJE to bear fruit.

Historically, RJ’s application to school-based situations was primarily an attempt to find alternatives to suspensions and expulsions. More recently, however RJ has also been taken up as a way to nurture healthy school climates. Thus, the writings of Morrison and Vaandering (2012) began to frame students’ behavior through a lens of social engagement as opposed to social control. Thus, although some would view RJE as a menu of interventions to address harm, many in the educational arena view RJE as a theoretical framework through which to view not only the repairing of harm but also the restoration of healthy relationships, emphasizing just and equitable learning environments. RJE is seen to transform conflict by creating opportunities to build social-emotional capacities, such as empathetic listening, self-

regulation, problem solving, and perspective taking (Pranis, 2005). Integrating RJE practices into the every day school life is a critical way of improving the culture and climate of a school in order to support SEL and the academic performance of all students and strengthen partnerships among all stakeholders (High HOPES Campaign Report, Spring 2012).

RJE in schools is not simply about introducing new programs and/or practices, but is also about providing a new framework for the work that educators are doing (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005). Therefore, the success and sustainability of restorative practice requires an intrinsic understanding that this is, ‘not an add-on program for the purposes of behavior management, nor is it just another tool in the toolbox for staff to use to deal with student behavior. In contrast, restorative school discipline represents a school culture that permeates all aspects of school organization and relationships within the school as well as relationships between the school and its community’ (Meyer & Evans, 2012, p.5).

Implementing and Integrating Restorative Justice in Schools

System-wide implementation of RJE practices is a long process and can take three to five years, depending on the size and scope of the school district (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005). This is also linked to the specific mandates being posed by the district with regards to the way RJE needs to get implemented at schools. Morrison’s (2005b) hierarchy of restorative practices is one such staged implementation approach based on a health care model, wherein schools should be both proactive and reactive in the use of restorative practices. These include universal, targeted and intensive responses that form a continuum of RJE practices, based on common principles (Refer to Figure 3).

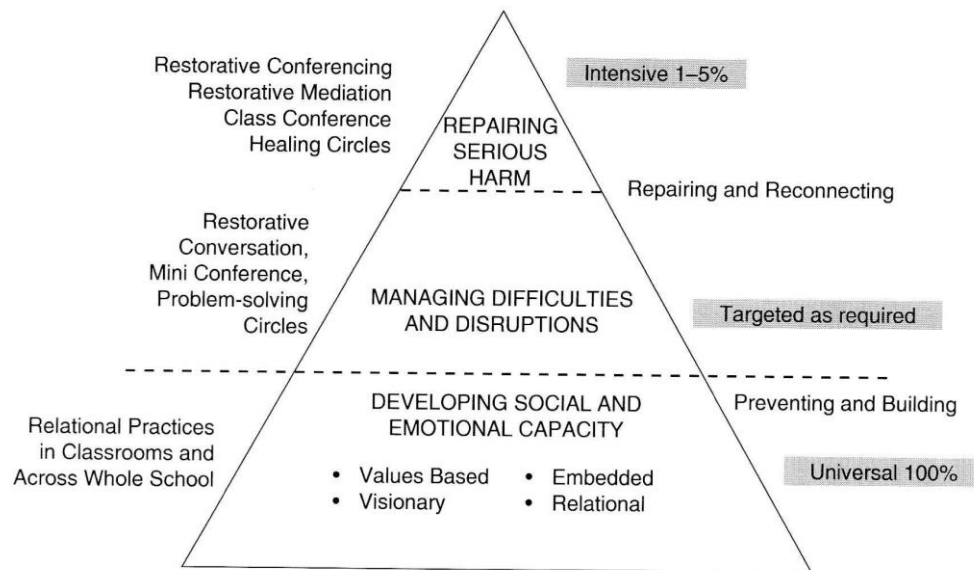


Figure 3:

Morrison's (2005b) Hierarchy of RJ Responses

The universal level of intervention adopts an immunization strategy by targeting all members of the school community, in order for everyone to gain SEL skills to resolve conflict in caring and respectful ways. The targeted level of intervention addresses conflict that arises and causes harm to others in the larger school community, often requiring a third party to help facilitate the process of reconciliation. The intensive level of intervention typically includes the participation of a larger group from the school or community that has been affected or need to be involved, such as parents, family members, friends, social workers, or juvenile justice and probation officials when a serious offence occurred within the school. These response levels create a continuum of RJE practices for various behavioral issues or other issues and help to ensure that restorative practices and language permeate the school and community and are not primarily reactive responses (Morrison, 2005b).

Circle processes, such as peacemaking circles, healing circles, talking circles etc., are increasingly gaining popularity in the RJE field, as practices that are not only used in cases of wrongdoing but also as a way of dialogue and community building. A circle process

usually entails participants sitting around in a physical circle and one or two facilitators, often called keepers, leading the process. A talking piece is passed around, usually clockwise, and only the person holding the talking piece is authorized to speak. After introductory comments, often including a discussion of values underlying the process, the keeper poses a question or a topic, and then passes the talking piece. Circles provide an orderly and reflective process that reinforces the underlying values of restorative discipline and peaceable schools (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005). In the case of more reactive approaches of dealing with school misconduct, victim/offender conferencing and mediation entail trained facilitators understanding the specific issues of victimization and offender behavior; thereby allowing them to share what happened, how each feels about it, what needs to be done to make the matter right, and how to avoid this situation in the future (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005). Together, the conference participants aim to determine a reasonable restorative sanction for the offender in lieu of employing traditional punitive sanctions like suspensions.

Peer jury on the other hand, is a youth centered approach in which student volunteers hear cases of minor school offenses committed by their peers. Ideally a peer juror is one who themselves has been a participant of the RJE process and has come to benefit from RJE. An adult coordinator oversees peer juries with youth volunteers who are trained as peer jurors and meets with the student referred for school disciplinary issues (Ashley & Burke, 2009). Restorative sanctions could include such things as community service, restitution, apologies, or specific behavioral change agreements, such as the offender agreeing to comply with certain conditions, sometimes in exchange for incentives (Stinchcomb, Bazemore, & Riestenberg, 2006). Restorative sanctions are intimately linked to taking responsibility for one's actions or for having caused harm.

Thorsborne (2011) states that if schools intend to implement restorative policy and protocols, they must pay close attention to the quality of staff relationships. Blood (2005), building on Watchel’s (1999) two-by-two social discipline/social capital window emphasized the need for the school community to have a shared framework for thinking and practicing RJE (Refer to Figure 4).



Figure 4: Social Discipline/ Social Capital Window (Blood, 2005)

The vertical axis refers to the structure and boundaries necessary to maintain the social order of the whole school community, including classrooms and playgrounds. The horizontal axis relates to the nurture and support that all members of the school community need. The four quadrants describe a range of disciplinary practice, as outlined: practice which lacks both structure and support is seen as neglectful (NOT engaging at any level); practice which is high in control and low on supportive relationships is experienced as authoritarian and punitive (doing things TO people); practice which is low on control and high on support is experienced as permissive and disempowering (doing things FOR people); practice which maintains high standards and boundaries at the same time as being supportive is experienced as firm and fair (doing things WITH others). The model allows schools to

identify current practices and confirm restorative practices, providing direction to efforts for organizational change and achieving preferred outcomes. This framework also dispels a common misconception that restorative practice is a soft option; in contrast, restorative practices seek to be firm and fair, strong on accountability and support. This framework assists schools in developing a common language based on restorative justice, as one of the most recognizable aspects of any organization's culture is the language used by management and staff about their work, their clients (students and parents) and each other. The use of restorative language becomes an indicator of organizational movement towards a restorative culture, as the community moves away from using blaming, stigmatizing, excusing, rescuing, helpless language and move towards more relational language which will in turn influence practice (Morrison et. al, 2006).

The most significant cost in implementing restorative practices in schools is training costs because the role of facilitating circle processes when serious harm is involved requires preparation and experience. Without knowing how to facilitate, including adequately preparing participants in advance, there is a risk of re-victimization and of creating more harm (National Center Brief, 2009; Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Schools should strive to utilize their financial resources to appoint full-time RJE coordinators who can provide internal professional development and facilitate circles within a safe space at the school known as the peace room (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Some of the common impediments related to successful implementation of RJE strategies in schools involve time constraints, issues with student participation given RJE entails voluntary participation, issues of confidentiality between participants especially for instances of mandated reporting requirements and a general lack of staff buy in (Hamilton & Hope, 2011).

Often RJE requires a significant shift in thinking on the part of educators and administrators who tend to hone alternative views about their relationship to students and about their behavior (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Thus it is important to distinguish whether RJE implementation and integration approaches involve either first order or second order change. According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013, p. 59), “First order change involves the integration of restorative practice into what already exists, while second order change is about whole school transformation”. Mezirow (2000) believes that a critical part of any change process is for individuals to change their frame of reference by reflecting on and challenging their beliefs and assumptions. Thus it is important that schools understand, plan and strategically manage the change process in order to successfully integrate and implement restorative practices. In the process of executing the plan, it is important to recognize that winning of hearts and minds is every bit as important as the plan itself (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013).

Change needs to be driven deeply into the fabric of the school culture so that it becomes part of school’s DNA (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). The very hierarchical nature of a school makes it resilient (Lee, 2004), wherein schools can easily slip back into their old ways of doing business, unless concrete measures are not undertaken to maximize and leverage reforms. There are many reasons why change or reform efforts fail. People in leadership positions do not have a systemic understanding of the causes of failure, in part because the same dysfunctional social arrangement that do so much to cause failure also do a great deal to obscure its origin (Payne, 2008). Parts of the school level impediments to instructional capacity include a generalized belief in program failure and professional development and a lack of programmatic coherence wherein parts of the school do not interact with one another (Payne, 2008). According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013), staff

entrusted with the responsibility of conducting restorative practices, must not view RJE as an imposition but perceive RJE as a willing investment. It is important that leaders do not rush to re-write school policy until a certain amount of experimentation is carried out to truly know what needs to be included. Declaring victory prematurely (Kotter, 2007) and leaders believing that announcing change equates to sound implementation (Zigarmi, et.al., 2006) are often met with resistance. Skeptics within schools are just waiting for a reason not to come on board especially since they have felt unsupported in the past and have seen one too many initiatives come and go (Ferris, 2003). As per Kotter & Cohen's (2002, p. 106) observation people need to 'see-feel-change', wherein short-term wins must not appear as random occurrences but must be public acknowledged and celebrated to give practitioners hope, maintain motivation and influence critics and cynics in positive ways.

Few schools are able to distinguish between first and second order change. According to the National Academy of Academic Leadership (n.d.), schools should aspire for second order change in order to bring about long-term sustained culture change at their schools. Schools need to actually do something significantly or fundamentally different from what is presently happening, because the culture change process should be deemed irreversible and not permit personnel to slip back into their old ways (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Thus the implementation and integration approach to RJE needs to be comprehensive and multi-faceted, because the way RJE is implemented distinguishes it as 'the way we do things around here', versus an occasional tool or behavioral management strategy used by schools when a child is in trouble (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). These aspects are related to the larger question surrounding whether RJE still occupies a marginal status within schools or has it gained mainstream prominence within schools, and also in becoming more mainstream is RJE a significant departure from punitive justice?

Impact Evaluation of Restorative Justice at Schools

The literature largely focused on the US context, touches upon the notions of success and challenges in the impact, implementation, and sustainability of RJE within schools. There is a variance in the kinds of outcomes that are addressed in the studies for example, some studies indicate that RJE resulted in an improved school climate (Mirsky, 2007; Mirsky & Watchel, 2007), whereas others indicate that RJE led to enhanced student connectedness, greater community and parent engagement, improved academic achievement, and offering student support (González, 2012).

Several empirical studies reviewed in this study emphasize a decline in exclusionary discipline and harmful behavior post RJE implementation across many school districts. For example, one school in Texas reported a drop of 84 percent in OSS amongst sixth graders during the first year RJE was introduced, and a 19 percent drop in all suspensions (Armour, 2013). A reduction of 44 percent in OSS was reported at the Denver school district, and Cole Middle School in Oakland saw a huge decline of 87 percent in suspensions after implementing RJE for two years (Baker, 2009). More recent figures from Oakland suggest continued success, with a 74-percent drop in suspensions and a 77-percent decrease in referrals for violence during a two-year follow up (Sumner et al., 2010; Davis, 2014). Results from another recent pilot study of restorative conferencing program in Minnesota highlighted a reduction in self-reported incidents of physical fighting and skipping school among conference participants (McMorris et al., 2013). The same study also showcased how restorative conferencing increased attendance for participants from pre-to-post periods. Jain et al., (2014) saw chronic absenteeism drop by 24 percent in middle schools implementing RJE compared to an increase in 62.3 percent amongst schools not implementing RJE, in the same period.

With regards to RJE's impacts on achievement and academic progress, the evidence is mixed. Jain and colleagues (2014) report a sizeable gain in graduation rates for schools implementing RJE (60 percent) compared to non-RJE high schools (7 percent). Norris (2009) however reports no significant change in grade point average between RJE participants and non-participants.

Another major problem confronting several students in the US schools is bullying (Christensen, 2009). However given the inherent power dynamics involved in bullying, there is limited evidence to showcase if RJE is a suitable response to bullying (Molnar-Main, 2014).

RJE is often called upon to address racial disproportionality in school suspensions, however there are very few studies surrounding the intersection of race and how it interacts with RJE. Race in the current study context is a proxy for variance in resource allocation based on geography. Past research has shown that there is a higher likelihood that non-white, minority populations reside in neighborhoods that are poorly resourced compared to parts of the city where predominantly white people reside (Payne, 2008). In a review of 13 publications that explore the use of restorative practices in schools in Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and the US, not one included a critical examination of racial disparities in school disciplinary practices. The studies also fail to mention that in urban schools, the majority of teachers are white and female (Edutopia, 2006), and the majority of students suspended are of color, male and from working-class backgrounds. Thereby, the implementation of RJE may necessitate an examination of race, class and gender. This is especially true because schools with larger populations of black students, arguably the sites where alternatives to zero tolerance are most needed are less likely than other schools to implement RJE (Payne & Welch, 2013).

A recent mixed method study of the Oakland School District compared and contrasted the implementation and effectiveness of RJE approaches for schools with versus schools without RJE and also tested to see if the effect of RJE interacted with race. A preliminary analysis shows significant interaction with race/ethnicity, suggesting that the impact of RJE participation is greater for African American students (vs. their counterparts). The difference remained even after controlling for select individual student-level socio-demographics, such as race, gender, socio-economic status, suspension rate at baseline, and school level factors such as school type (David et al., 2014). Gregory and colleagues (2014) indicate that teachers who implemented RJE frequently had better relationships with their students, as the students felt respected by their teachers, and teachers generally issued fewer referrals. The authors also found preliminary indications that frequent use of RJE led to reductions in the racial discipline gap, but that disparate discipline patterns were not completely removed from the school.

Wadhwa (2016) conducted an extensive ethnographic comparison of urban schools (primarily African American students) implementing RJE within the broader context of racialized disciplinary practices. Her findings pointed to the fact that owing to considerations of resource constraints and flux that existed in urban schools, RJE practices were sequestered and did not permeate the entire school buildings. This lead administrators and teachers revert to suspensions and abide by school-wide rules that were not consistent with RJE. Interestingly, Wadhwa also found that despite RJE's inconsistent utility, RJE practioners strived to raise their students' critical consciousness, so that students saw RJE not just as a means of reforming individual student behaviors but viewed RJE as a part of a larger social justice agenda.

Wadhwa's (2016) study also underscores the literature on the practical challenges faced by school practitioners in the implementation of RJE. For instance, educators are seen to being resistant to RJE, as it is often perceived as being 'too soft' on student offenses. With RJE, teachers are often required to perform duties beyond their job descriptions such as attend RJE trainings, conduct circles during instruction time and spend time connecting one-on-one with students, thereby throwing up questions on staff buy in (Evans & Lester, 2013). Solinas (2006) through her qualitative fieldwork, found that school staff, especially teachers were "stuck in the old ways", found mandatory RJE trainings unsavory and found implementing restorative practices cumbersome. Macklem (2003) on the other hand, found that teacher's attitudes towards RJE can change post experimenting with RJE themselves, wherein the positive externalities of the ideology become apparent.

Time is of the essence with regards to bringing about a shift in mindset and overall school culture. While RJE programs will certainly vary by the size of the school and scope of the program (Sumner et al., 2010), some researchers suggest that a shift in attitudes toward punishment may take one to three years (Karp & Breslin, 2001), and the deep shift to a restorative-oriented school climate might take up to three to five years (Evans & Lester, 2013). Time and staff buy-in also precipitates the question on resources required to introduce RJE at a school or an entire district (Guckenburg et al., 2016). Very often pursuing grant opportunities, or reallocating existing funds within the district leads to the maintenance of RJE. For instance, one district in Detroit leveraged its Title I funding to ramp up its RJE efforts by hiring a full-time coordinator. Oakland and its surrounding counties were successful in leveraging their existing community partnerships and pooling their resources for RJE (Kidde & Alfred, 2011).

Regardless of program type or name, school reports suggest that for RJE to be effective, it should be embedded within the school culture (González, 2012) or ethos (Beckman, McMorris, & Gower, 2012). The most common goals in embedding RJE in the overall school culture are to create an environment that is respectful and tolerant (Hantzopolous, 2013), accepting (González, 2012), and supportive (Mirsky & Watchel, 2007). While the evidence is limited, there are findings to suggest that RJE improves school climate. For example, for a pilot study of a restorative conferencing program in Minnesota, McMorris and colleagues (2013) report increased school connectedness and improved problem solving among students in a six-week follow up. Jain and colleagues (2014) also note that two thirds of staff perceived RJE as improving the social-emotional development of students, and 70 percent of staff reported that RJE improved overall school climate during the first year of implementation. A critical driver to long-term sustainability is a district's ability to integrate the RJE approach into its formal policy and procedures and, also create a strong professional development arm for continued training opportunities for staff (The Advancement Project, 2014; Mayworm, Sharkey, Welsh, & Scheidel, in press).

Gaps in the review of related literature

A majority of the literature on the impact and effectiveness of RJE largely relies on descriptive statistics and interview data about the positive outcomes of RJE. Whilst not discounting the significance of outcome measures such as a reduction in suspension numbers, it is important to note that current discipline trends are not occurring in a vacuum. For instance, federal policies now provide an incentive for school leaders to remove low-achieving students (most disruptive students) from schools, and in addition districts are presently receiving mandates to lower their suspension numbers (Kelly, 2010; Advancement Project, 2010; Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Additionally school culture is often influenced by

other environmental externalities such as neighborhood gentrification, growth of charter schools, urban flux, forming partnerships with community agencies, enhanced accountability measures, amongst others, which could potentially influence the growth of RJE within school spaces (Journey for Justice Alliance Report, May 2014; High Hopes Campaign Report, Spring 2012). These latter aspects are more likely to affect schools located in minority, marginalized communities.

All in all the literature on the various limitations and constraints that schools operate under calls into question the sustainability and effectiveness of RJE in urban schools strapped for financial and human resources. For instance, Wadhwa's (2016) study states that the urban education context, marked by high administrator and teacher turnover, cyclical reform efforts aimed at improving achievement and a general state of flux at schools significantly impacts the longevity of any initiative, including the move away from punitive to restorative discipline. As the editors at *Rethinking Schools* (Christensen, 2009 as stated in Wadhwa 2016, p.148) note, "At far too many schools commitments to implement RJ occur amid relentless high-stakes 'test and punish' regimens-amidst scripted curriculum, number test-prep drills, budget cutbacks, school closures, the constant shuffling from school to school of teachers, and principal". The question remains as to whether CPS that is infamous for its instability will follow a similar trajectory wherein years of energy and momentum behind RJE dissipate. Therefore the current study employs a more critical examination of the RJE's impacts and places it in a broader institutional environmental and policy context and examines the role of multiple actors in the unfolding of RJE within CPS.

There have been a handful of studies that have looked at the dole out of RJE within school spaces. However no known studies examine the entire process from adoption, to implementation, and potential institutionalization. This study fills that gap. The current study

seeks to understand how adoption decisions influence subsequent implementation, and in turn whether effective implementation becomes institutionalized as the norm. By focusing on the temporality of RJE adoption, implemented and integrated across the district and within schools, the study helps analyze the unfolding of RJE at multiple levels. In addition, reports have indicated that school districts ought to incorporate RJE into their formal policy and procedures for long-term sustainability of RJE efforts. As indicated, there are a few districts that have done so, including CPS (Ashley & Burke, 2009). By assessing the broader district policy context in which schools are embedded, the current study analyzes the dynamic interplay between an RJE district mandate and on-the-ground change management at each individual school.

Several reports have recommended that for RJE to effect change, schools need to focus on SEL as a part of their restorative approaches. More so, research has recommended that RJE needs to operate beyond a practice/tool but act as a framework for enhancing other SEL initiatives. Is the change first order change or second order change? Past research has not assessed the interconnectedness between RJE and SEL initiatives. Schools are often sites of myriad programming and several multi-tiered SEL initiatives are already in operation at schools such as PBIS. Thus the question remains as to how RJE is specifically improving the culture and in what way is RJE adding value that is distinctive from similar SEL initiatives. By adopting a unique organizational theoretical lens, the current study has explored these facets with further elucidation in the theoretical and conceptual section.

There are very few thorough in-depth qualitative examinations of the process of how RJE pans out within schools (e.g. Wadhwa, 2016; Solinas, 2006). Therefore, the current study focuses on an in-depth comparative qualitative examination to observe what a paradigm shift towards RJE means and understand how this varies across partnership

contexts and geography, i.e., a proxy for race and class dynamics. In addition, within each school my study is gaining multiple perspectives from multiple personnel within each school setting to understand how immersed RJE is, and whether whole-school, participative second order change is a reality.

Successful implementation of restorative practice in schools requires a firm understanding of the philosophy and the nature of this practice. Payne (2012) reminds us that if we are working successfully with young people to change their behavior, three things need to be present: support (teaching explicitly what is needed), high expectations (pressure that comes from a relationship of mutual respect) and insistence (the motivation and persistence that comes from a relationship of mutual respect). More broadly, RJE is about effective conflict management, predicated on the need for social and emotional wellbeing in schools. If we are to move beyond restorative practices being seen as little more than another behavior management strategy or response to significant issues of harm, then we must focus our attention on proactive strategies to resolve underlying issues and to prevent them from re-occurring.

CHAPTER 3

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS & RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

As the third largest school district in the country, CPS has 664 schools serving more than 400,000 students. Schools are organized into 16 networks. Each has a chief, staff, and organizational autonomy for leading the 25 to 50 schools within the network (CASEL Report, March 2015). CPS has undergone several waves of school reform in the past without much lasting success (Payne, 2008). Use of non-exclusionary strategies like RJE is another reform gaining prominence within CPS.

This chapter delves into a historical overview of the growth of RJE within CPS and how CBOs spearheaded reform efforts across the district, which has led to major amendments in the SCC. As highlighted in the previous chapter, it is important that RJE needs to be understood in the context of SEL, thus this study showcases the link between RJE and other non-exclusionary strategies within CPS. Finally, given our understanding of urban flux, the failure of past reform efforts and the contentious politicalized CPS school district, there are serious concerns raised about the sustainability of RJE at CPS.

Historical Overview of Restorative Justice in Chicago Public Schools

In the early 2000s, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), a state agency, began to advocate for the broad implementation of RJ within Illinois' juvenile legal system (Ashley & Stevenson, 2006a). Out of this grew the Illinois Balanced and Restorative Justice Project (IBARJ), a 501 C3 organization that seeks to create and sustain the availability of RJE practices and programs for citizens of Illinois through leadership, education and promotion (POWER-PAC Report, Fall 2012).

In Chicago, 20 percent of juvenile arrests occur while young people are on school grounds; police presence in elementary and high schools in poor neighborhoods is the norm

rather than the exception (Hereth et al., 2012). Restorative practices have been used in some form in CPS since the mid 1990's. In 2001-02, CPS piloted peer jury program training and technical support by contracting with a local youth and family CBO across 21 target schools (Ashley & Burke, 2009). Peer juries were insufficient to address the zero tolerance approaches that were pervasive in CPS. In 2003-04, parent leaders came together stating concerns that CPS has one of the highest rates of suspension in the nation, and their African-American and Latino children were disproportionately affected by suspensions, expulsions and arrests. These parent leaders as a part of another family-focused CBO spoke with hundreds of families at forums across the city and went in search of alternative approaches to school discipline and found innovative RJE solutions in Los Angeles and Minneapolis. Thus in 2006-07, a four-year campaign called the Elementary Justice Campaign led by local CBOs including youth, parents, and community members convinced the Chicago School Board of Education to revise its SCC. Parents won funding and opened the first parent-led Peace Center in an elementary school (POWER-PAC Report, Fall 2012).

The revised 2007 SCC was meant to incorporate RJ practices, beyond peer jury as a required part of schools' responses to student misconduct and reduce suspensions to the minimum (Wallace, 2007; POWER-PAC Report, Fall 2012). Financial support for implementing RJE programs were being made available through Title IV Safe and Drug Free Schools, U.S. Department of Education, school discretionary funds, fundraising, and partnerships with local social service agencies (Ashley & Burke, 2009).

In 2009, Principal Dozier of Fenger High School was thrust into the spotlight when CNN brought cameras on school grounds for its eight-part docu-series "Chicagoland" (Harris, 2015, September 2). Fenger, a troubled high school in the gang war-torn Roseland neighborhood, is the school that had become infamous after the death of student Derrion

Albert. However, with the assistance of a four-year federal grant, Dozier and her staff led a remarkable turnaround by using RJ methods and integrating SEL into classrooms. Under her leadership, graduation rates improved from about 30 percent to more than 80 percent (Konkol, 2015, June 18).

Nonetheless, when Dozier stepped down as principal, many were worried that RJE would go away with her because it remained poorly institutionalized within CPS as a whole (Harris, 2015, September 2; Konkol, 2015, June 18.) Despite the successful campaign to add RJ to the SCC in 2007, several CPS schools continued to treat suspensions, expulsions and arrests as a matter of routine, while RJE methods remained underutilized. Additionally, CPS did not provide citywide support to schools desiring to implement RJ; furthermore, the state of Illinois' RJE mandate had never been accompanied by significant, robust or consistent funding (Hereth et al., 2012).

Therefore, in the fall of 2010, a coalition of seven CBOs citywide came together to form the High HOPES Campaign, which strived to make RJE standardized practices within CPS. The campaign had the stated goal of reducing suspensions and expulsions in CPS by forty percent through the citywide implementation of RJ programs (High HOPES Campaign Report, Spring 2012). High HOPES proposed that every school should have at least one full-time staff person devoted to RJ programming, a cost that would ultimately be offset by an increase in attendance and the reduction in school security costs, such as cameras, guards and police. A local non-profit published a Parent-to-Parent Guide to RJ in CPS in 2010, providing peer-to-peer training to over 500 parents on their rights, the practice and philosophy of RJ, and how to push it in their local schools (POWER-PAC Report, Fall 2012). In 2011, VOYCE, released a report that identified the impact of Chicago's harsh disciplinary policies and called for RJE interventions. According to the report, the district has

been scrutinized for its disproportionate expenditure on security measures, such as metal detectors and surveillance cameras and stationing security and police personnel within schools (VOYCE Report, July 2011). Following this, more major changes were made to the CPS SCC in the summers of 2012 and 2014, wherein suspension may only be used as the “last resort” and the maximum a student can be suspended is 5 days (reduced from 10) (POWER-PAC Report, Fall 2012).

The popularity of the High HOPES Campaign and the VOYCE report garnered support from various external stakeholders for the expansion of RJE within CPS. For instance, in October 2011, Cook County⁶ board president Toni Preckwinkle expressed her support for closing the juvenile temporary detention facility and moving young people to community-based programs (Slife & Eldeib, 2011). The year 2014 saw the launch of community based initiatives such as the Restore, Empower, Advance, Love Justice (REAL Justice), Right on Justice and community-based RJ Hubs funded by the Woods Fund, Chicago. These initiatives had the objective of institutionalizing RJ across various communities of color that were experiencing disproportionate impacts of the criminal justice system as well as punitive, discriminatory school policies (REAL Justice Brochure).

More recently, in 2015 the Mayor’s Commission for a Safer Chicago Strategic Plan emphasized creating restorative school communities as a means of addressing the growing endemic violence in the city of Chicago, which inadvertently affects public school going students. The restorative school communities working group is collaborating with stakeholders and partners to develop strategies that get students safely to school; keep them on track by overcoming academic hurdles; and replace the zero tolerance discipline policies

⁶ Chicago is a part of Cook County

with restorative practices that prevent and de-escalate conflict by addressing the underlying causes of personal conflicts and misconduct.

The Embrace Restorative Justice in Schools Collaborative comprising of primarily CBOs, neighborhood associations, research and advocacy centers, individuals and Universities are continuing to advocate for the growth of RJE within CPS (Source: Document given to me by one of the Embrace Chicago CBOs). These coalitions and various initiatives provide strong examples of movement building around RJE in Chicago and how CBOs have come to become RJE experts, as they continue to work with the central district and individual schools to institutionalize RJE. The next section substantiates specific details about the changes in CPS SCC regarding RJE and the relationship between RJE and other CPS SEL initiatives.

Relationship between Restorative Justice and other non-exclusionary strategies at Chicago Public Schools

Over the last decade, CPS has substantially expanded its support for non-exclusionary strategies and has identified the need for schools across the district to mitigate the effects of violence and trauma, as well as build SEL skills. To do so, the district has implemented a number of high-profile programs designed to address these issues. For example, a partnership with CASEL emerged during this time, and many programs were put into place at various schools, including Conversation, Help, Activity, Movement, Participation, Success (CHAMPS), Dignity in Schools (DSC), and Becoming a Man (BAM). Through the Culture of Calm Initiative (2009-10 and 2010-11), the district provided several high schools with funds to implement programs for addressing behavioral and safety problems. A number of schools have implemented programs that teach students positive behaviors (e.g., PBIS) or address SEL needs. Thus given this history of reform within CPS,

subsequent discussions will lay emphasis on understanding how RJE fits within such reform efforts for handling matters of school discipline (Sartain et al., September 2015).

Prior to the start of 2012 to 2013 school year, CPS made changes to the SCC requiring principals to obtain central office approval in order to suspend students for more than five days. The district also eliminated mandatory 10-day suspensions and expulsions for the most severe offenses⁷. In the fall of 2013, CPS made further changes that reflected a focus on alternative strategies to discipline, through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework. The new SCC also offered a wide range of options available to school administrators. According to the district, these options had the intention of providing flexibility to administrators rather than a one-size-fits-all approach (Sartain et al., September 2015).

The district released a plan to reduce the use of exclusionary disciplinary practices in schools called the Suspensions and Expulsions Reduction Plan in February 2014 (updated in June 2014). The district gathered stakeholders from across the city, a group called the Chicago Collaborative for Supportive School Discipline, to hear different perspectives on school disciplinary practices, and developed new guidelines and training for school leaders to try to address the high rates of exclusionary disciplinary practices in schools (Sartain et al., September 2015; CPS Office of College & Career Success, June 2014). Moreover, the SCC incorporated language that endorses the use of restorative practices for certain kinds of behavioral infraction as a part of MTSS. The key points of revision to the SCC were:

⁷ It is important to highlight that the types of suspensions that the policy limited were suspensions for the worst infractions, those that would have warranted a long suspension, or for students that had multiple infractions for which other interventions may have been ineffective.

- Provide clear guidance on instructive, corrective, and restorative responses
- Diminish subjectivity to improve consistency
- Improve categorization of behaviors
- Limit use of suspensions
- Enhance accessibility for parents/guardians
- Expand discretion for police notification
- Provide support in lieu of expulsions

The framing and guidelines, which supports the MTSS framework and the CPS School Climate Standards, is highlighted (Refer to Figure 5). It guides administrators in responding to a broad range of student behaviors with strategies that align with the CPS SCC and teach new, positive behavior patterns (CPS Guidelines for Effective Discipline, n.d.). The District's strategy is focused on both research-based preventive structures and targeted interventions to address the root cause of students' behaviors (trauma-focused groups, targeted skill-building, restorative responses that repair relationships, among others), and delivering tailored supports to help those students excel, all this whilst keeping them in the classrooms (CPS Office of Communications, 2016 February 12).

Social Emotional Learning	Mental Health		Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support	Restorative Justice
Individual Social skills Instruction Psychiatric care	Crisis counseling Individual support teams/plans	Tier 3: Intensive	Wraparound Complex FBA/BIP Individual planning	Family group conferencing Community conferencing
Targeted social skills Instruction	Group counseling/ support groups Staff & family Coordinated referral process /monitor progress	Tier 2: Strategic	Brief FBA/BIP Check in/out Check/Connect Social academic instructional groups	Peer Jury Conference Problem- solving circles
SEL Curriculum School climate Assessment	Mental Health Screening Prevention/ Wellness promotion	Tier 1: Universal	School-wide behavior expectations Acknowledge positive Behaviors Data-based planning	Circles Restorative Chats Data-based Planning

Figure 5: CPS MTSS guidelines (Source: Osher 2014)

CPS designates OSS as a last resort and utilizes a systems-change approach to bring about a more restorative culture in schools. When schools develop disciplinary responses that are instructive and restorative, student-teacher relationships, student outcomes, and overall school climate all stand to improve (CPS Guidelines for Effective Discipline, n.d.). For instance, for behaviors classified in Groups 1 (tardiness, cell phones etc.), and 2 (minor physical actions, leaving school etc.) of the SCC, administrators should use the least intensive response necessary. First-time issues are often effectively resolved through restorative conversations, re-teaching expectations, or a logical consequence (for example, a student who uses a cell phone in class therefore must turn in his/her phone for the rest of the class). When needed, additional instructive, corrective or restorative responses may help resolve ongoing minor misbehaviors and attendance issues.

The use of detention and ISS is permitted in certain circumstances, but only recommended as part of a larger behavior plan when appropriate for the particular student and incident. For behaviors classified in Groups 3 (fighting with no injuries, repeat offenses from group 1 & 2, etc.), and 4 (fighting with injury, theft <\$ 150, etc.) of the SCC, administrators should aim to deescalate the behavior and the impact of the behavior. Instructive, corrective or restorative responses should address the root of the behavior and prevent further behavior incidents. OSS should be used as a last resort, and is only recommended as part of a larger behavior plan when appropriate for the particular student and incident. For behaviors classified in Groups 5 (threat, gang activity etc.), and 6 (weapons, drug sale etc.) of the SCC, administrators should aim to de-escalate and reduce the impact of the behavior. The use of ISS and/or OSS is recommended in most situations, but should be used as part of a larger behavior plan when appropriate for the particular student and incident. Instructive, corrective or restorative responses should be used to address the root cause and prevent further behavior incidents (CPS Office of College & Career Success, June 2014; CPS Guidelines for Effective Discipline, n.d.).

In addition, CPS has instated an online communication tool called Verify for the purpose of data management and analysis. Using Verify, staff can make entries regarding SCC student violations (Groups 1 to 6), alleged employee misconducts, injuries, property damage, harassment/threat incidents and vehicle incidents (CPS Impact Verify Report, n.d.). How and when RJE ought to be deployed within schools as per changes in SCC policy has been elucidated in the next section.

Chicago Public Schools Implementation Guidelines for Restorative Justice

Adapted from the Administrator's Guidelines on Effective Discipline as well as a document created by CPS and the Embrace Restorative Practices in CPS Collaborative (n.d.),

a tabulation on the use of RJE within CPS has been created (Refer to Table 1). The table describes the specific restorative practice, when it is supposed to be utilized, the expected outcome from its usage and how the appropriate RJ response aligns to the specific tier of the MTSS framework (i.e., Tier 1: Universal, Tier 2: Strategic, Tier 3: Intensive). The study also examines to what extent schools follow these guidelines.

Table 1: Restorative Practices CPS Implementation Guidelines

Restorative Practice & Description	When to Use	Anticipated Outcome	Tier
<p>Restorative Questions/ Chats/ Conversations</p> <p>Rather than chastising a student for his/her behavior, engage him/her in a conversation that uses restorative questions, affective statements, and empathetic listening for both the respondent and the person affected. Examples of restorative questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What happened? - How do you feel about the situation now? - Who do you think has been affected by what happened? - What steps can you take to make things better? 	<p>Restorative questions are asked following an incident and used in most restorative practices</p>	<p>Restorative questions can engage a referred student in a reflective process and empower them to solve problems. Restorative questions provide opportunities for participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Express themselves - Explain what happened - Describe their feelings - Understand the impact of their behavior - Determine what they can do to change their behavior - Understand harm or potential harm - Can help uncover the root causes of behavior <p>Restorative questions can provide opportunities for facilitators to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide support - Understand the root causes of behavior - Develop trust with participants 	<p>Tiers 1,2 & 3</p>
<p>Affective ("I") Statements</p> <p>Affective statements share the impact on the person harmed with those responsible in an effort to build social and emotional skills and to encourage empathy</p>	<p>Are elemental to each Restorative Practice</p>	<p>Sharing feelings is an important part of building relationships and is critical to establishing expectations, building empathy, and helping each person to understand the impact of their behavior and take responsibility for their actions</p>	<p>Tiers 1,2 & 3</p>
<p>Empathetic Listening</p> <p>Empathetic listening is when one person essentially listens to the thoughts, feelings, and needs of someone else. Using a talking piece can be helpful to promote empathetic listening.</p> <p>Peer Conference/ Peer Mediation (aka Peer Jury)</p> <p>Peer Conferences is a voluntary student-led process in which a small group of trained Peer Conference members work with referred students who have violated a school rule or are in conflict with others to understand the impact of their actions and to find ways to make things better.</p>	<p>Is elemental to each Restorative Practice</p>	<p>Allows for non-judgmental communication leading to a deeper understanding of the thoughts, feelings, and needs of the participant (s)</p>	<p>Tiers 1,2 & 3</p>
<p>Peace Circles</p> <p>Peace circles encompass different types of circles with different functions including a broad range of proactive circles. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talking - Understanding - Healing - Support - Community Building - Conflict - Reintegration - Celebration <p>They are held to build relationships and promote dialogue in topics that could be sensitive, thereby creating a safe space.</p>	<p>Peer conference can be used in response to chronic inappropriate behaviors; persistent disruptive behaviors; some seriously disruptive behaviors (e.g., classroom misconduct, conflicts with teachers, student conflicts, tardiness, minor property damage, name-calling, threats, etc.). It is used after an incident has occurred. Referrals usually come from the discipline office or directly from teachers</p>	<p>Peer conferences create a non-judgmental space for the referred student (s), those affected, and members of the school community to discuss what happened, build accountability and collaborate to find solutions. It seeks to increase empathy, promote relationship building, strengthen communication skills, and encourage the promotion and inclusion of all students.</p>	<p>Tier 2</p>
<p>Mediation</p> <p>Mediation is a voluntary process where two or three individuals in conflict with each other meet with a trained adult mediator in a non-judgmental and confidential space to talk about what happened and to resolve the specific issues</p> <p>Restorative Group Conferencing</p> <p>Restorative Group Conferencing is a more formal, scripted intervention comprised of a series of restorative questions that are asked in a structured order to assist young people in taking responsibility for their wrongdoing while helping the person harmed to seek closure. It can include families and support persons for both the harmed person and the harmer. Known as an accountability conference in some communities, this model emphasized reintegrating or keeping the referred student into the school and can be used as an alternative to suspension.</p>	<p>Conflict circles are used in response to specific incidents; by bringing together affected participants to discuss what happened, what the impact was and how it can be repaired</p>	<p>Peace circles may result in collaborative agreements between the participants that outline steps that can be taken to repair the harm as well as measures for preventing future harm. Peace circles help heal the affected parties and transform relationships.</p>	<p>Tiers 1,2,3</p>
<p>Restorative Group Conferencing</p> <p>Restorative Group Conferencing should only be led by staff or volunteers trained in the practice</p>	<p>Mediation is used to deescalate or resolve conflicts that involve multiple individuals</p>	<p>Mediation often results in an agreement between the people involved, outlining steps that each can take to make things better, prevent or manage future conflict, and re-connect to the school community</p>	<p>Tiers 2 & 3</p>

On having gotten a sense of when to use restorative practices with the anticipated outcomes as stated in Table 1, the following section spells out how RJE has more recently undergone reformulation to become a part of SEL, and the kinds of resources that currently emerge for its sustainability. However beyond funding and resources, sustainability is brought into question vis a vis the complex CPS institutional environment in which schools are embedded given its tumultuous history of reform efforts and financial constraints.

Sustainability of Restorative Justice within Chicago Public Schools

More recently, CPS working in close conjunction with CASEL has restructured their existing non-exclusionary programming under the broad SEL umbrella (Refer to Figure 6). The SEL umbrella encompasses several of the district's initiatives including RJE, to improve academic success, school and classroom culture, mental and behavioral health, and school safety. In 2014-15, the district hired 14 network SEL specialists to bring systematic SEL implementation to scale and invest in building in-school SEL capacity (CASEL Report, March 2015)

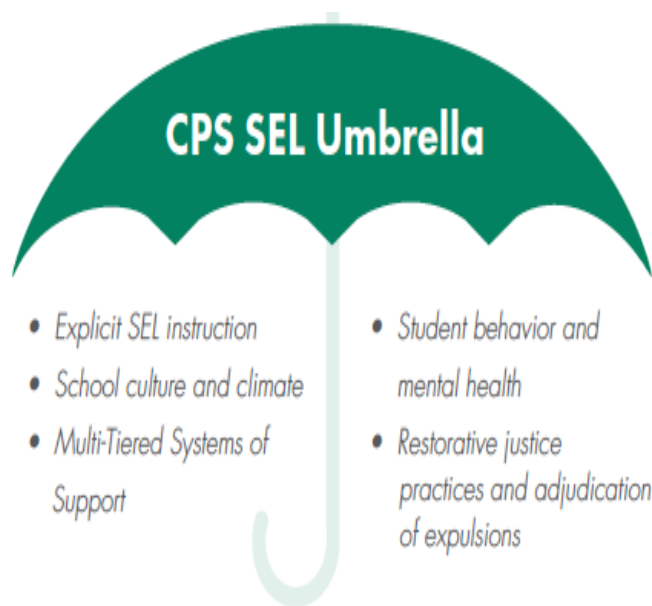


Figure 6: CPS SEL Umbrella (Source: CASEL Report, March 2015)

CPS has defined three pillars for the infusion of SEL into the fabric of its schools: (1) creating a positive and proactive school climate in which SEL is present in all practices and procedures; (2) adult awareness, modeling, and integration of social emotional competencies in their teaching practices; and (3) explicit and integrated student instruction in social-emotional competencies (CASEL Report, March 2015). For instance, School Site Behavioral Health Teams/Care Teams help schools develop teams to review individual students' social and emotional/ behavioral health especially for at-risk students. A Restorative Practices (RP) Coach (funded by the district), a practitioner usually from a CBO helps build capacity at the school one day a week by leading or co-leading professional development, morning meetings, peace circles, peer juries, and other practices. Approximately 100 schools were assigned RP coaches during the 2014-15 school year (CASEL Report, March 2015). In addition, schools leverage their Climate and Culture Teams who are responsible for the overall safety and security of the school and play a critical role in the school's culture and climate to build a calm, structured, and positive learning environment at CPS. The team actively involves itself in the progressive discipline system⁸ and supplements the on-site security team as the first line of defense to defuse and de-escalate student misconduct and/or serious incidents (CPS Careers Webpage, 2014).

CPS is developing financially sustainable strategies for implementing district wide SEL. Overall the district made an investment of more than \$9 million for the third year of

⁸ Progressive discipline processes, shall be designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior leading to the discipline, that the previous discipline history of the student being disciplined and other relevant factors will be taken into account, and that all due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed. (Source: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Progressive-Discipline-Process.aspx>)

SEL implementation (2014-15) and intends to continue growing its annual budget towards expanding school-level implementation and assessing its overall impact (CASEL Report, March 2015). However the question remains as to whether funding is sufficient for CPS to implement SEL widely.

Given the positive momentum surrounding SEL and RJ within CPS, it is important to understand that RJE is operating within a school district that is under mayoral control, its leadership can and has changed frequently, and its priorities and funding have been inconsistent (CASEL Report, March 2015). Public education nationally is under a lot of duress and, Chicago is no exception. Back in May 2013, faced with a reported \$1 billion deficit, the Board voted to close 47 underutilized elementary schools (de la Torre et.al, January, 2015). The mass closings were met with fierce resistance from many families, neighborhood groups, and the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU)⁹. Families worried about children's safety because students would now have to travel further to their new schools, oftentimes through unfamiliar and, in some cases, unsafe areas of gang activity (de la Torre et.al, January, 2015). Meanwhile, the district continues its dramatic expansion of charter schools, educational privatization and high-stakes accountability, which have been shown to impact the most racially isolated and economically marginalized neighborhoods in Chicago (Journey For Justice Alliance Report, May, 2014; Hereth et al., 2012).

CPS continues to face financial pressure. Very recently, CTU organized an unfair labor practice strike on April 1st, 2016 aimed at the Board, since the Board's only solution to

⁹ The Chicago Teachers Union is an organization of educators dedicated to advancing and promoting quality public education, improving teaching and learning conditions, and protecting members' rights. (Source: <http://www.ctunet.com/about>)

fix the financial mess was to force education staff to pay in the form of pay cuts and benefit reductions, to slash school budgets, and to continue to close schools (Chicago Union Teacher, April 2016). More so, there has been a steady decline in the number of school psychologists and social workers working within CPS, disproportionate to the amount of student trauma that exists in a chaotic, under-resourced school system (Chicago Union Teacher, April 2016). Knowing CPS' unpopular and tumultuous history makes embedding SEL and RJE into the core systems and structures of schools very challenging but critical for its long-term sustainability.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Since RJE seeks to reduce the dependence on the formal justice system for handling youth misconduct, human service organizations are frequently charged with implementing RJE programming. Human service organizations are “that set of organizations whose principal function is to protect, maintain, or enhance the personal wellbeing of individuals by defining, shaping, or altering their personal attributes” (Hasenfeld, 1983,p.1). Schools and CBO’s represent such human service organizations and this study specifically focuses on the RJE partnerships drawn up between them. Drawing on organizational perspectives to examine how RJE is being adopted, implemented and integrated is an important question for scholars of RJE. Previous studies have largely examined the impact of RJE bereft of the organizational and broader institutional context in which schools are embedded. Therefore employing a unique organizational lens and, analyzing the process of how schools through their various CBO partnerships receive, interpret and incorporate innovations such as RJE, would extend scholarship on RJE in general, and provide further insights on the long-term potential of RJE.

Before specifying the various theoretical and conceptual frameworks used in this study, it is important to distinguish the key differences between adoption, implementation and institutionalization/integration. Adoption refers to the decision to integrate a new practice. Implementation is putting that practice into action so that it is consistently followed. However, for implementation to be complete the goal should become one of achieving institutionalization/integration, i.e., making change stick. Institutionalization of a process is the ultimate completion of an implementation; when we form habits, we institutionalize our behaviors. Too often organizations settle for implementation instead of pushing for the total

acceptance and adoption of a process (Klubeck, Langthorne & Padgett, 2010). For instance, if a man is keen on losing weight, he decides to adopt a diet plan and begins to implement the diet. However, he would be better off institutionalizing healthier eating habits in the long run to keep a check on his weight.

The current study will be drawing upon four different theoretical and conceptual frameworks as they relate to the three major research questions posed, and the multiple actors that I am contending with in the study. The first perspective is the institutional entrepreneurship framework, which largely focuses on how CBOs are most suited to serve as institutional entrepreneurs within the CPS district since they have been spearheading RJE reform efforts from the beginning and infusing such practices within schools. Thus, institutional entrepreneurs play an important role right from adoption, implementation, through institutionalization of RJE. Secondly, the study draws from Klein and Knight's (2005) innovation implementation framework that spells out the nuts and bolts of implementing an innovation such as RJE and what might be some of the common barriers faced. The third theoretical framework is Matland's (1995) ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation, which spells out the relations between top-down and bottom-up policy implementation models in light of the changes being made at the CPS policy level. The research uses Matland's (1995) framework to understand how policy reform was brought about in the first place especially through the efforts of CBOs and, once changes in policy have been instated, how are those changes being reflected and perceived at the local school levels.

The final theoretical framework is Roger's (2003) diffusion of innovation approach that guides this study's analysis with regards to: 1) how RJE is getting diffused and integrated within schools based on its perceived attributes especially with regards to being

more advantageous than punitive discipline as well as other similar SEL initiatives and, 2) questions surrounding RJE's confirmation and sustainability vis a vis RJE being understood as just another fad/fashion coming down the school pipeline. Literature points to the fact that RJE's sustainability is intimately linked to whether RJE is understood as a framework rather than another tool, and whether RJE is understood in conjunction to school culture and climate rather than another behavioral management program. Thorsborne and Blood's (2013) conceptual piece on *Implementing Restorative Practices in Schools: A Practical Guide to Transforming School Communities* serves as an important guide in support of the four major theoretical frameworks stated.

Institutional Entrepreneurship

Eisenstadt (1980) was the first to use the notion of institutional entrepreneurship to characterize actors who serve as catalysts for structural change and take the lead in being the impetus for, and giving direction to change. Drawing from new institutional theory, institutional entrepreneurs are seen to engage in a competition for the ability to own and frame an idea in hopes that they can express their self-interest in shaping how the idea is institutionalized (Hardy & Maguire, 2008). Studies of institutional entrepreneurship have highlighted the enabling role of an actor's social position and how that might impact both on the actors' perception of the field (Dorado, 2005) and their access to external resources needed to engage in institutional entrepreneurship (Lawrence, 1999). Fligstein (1997, 2001) considers institutional entrepreneurs to be socially skilled actors, and are therefore able to abstract from the concerns of others and take on an autonomous reflexive stance (Mutch, 2007).

The institutional entrepreneur's primary challenge is how to effect institutional change without being impositional. Since they can seldom change institutions alone,

institutional entrepreneurs must typically mobilize allies (e.g. Boxebaum & Battilana, 2005; Fligstein, 1997; Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002), and develop alliances and cooperation (Fligstein, 2001; Lawrence, Hardy & Phillips, 2002; Rao, 1998). Hence, many perceive institutional entrepreneurship as a complex cultural and political process (DiMaggio, 1988; Fligstein, 1997; Rao, 1998) where institutional entrepreneurs must mobilize diverse social skills depending on the kind of institutional project they intend to bring into action (Perkmann & Spicer, 2007). The process of institutional entrepreneurship unfolds in the following ways:

- (1) *Using discursive strategies:* It is imperative that institutional entrepreneurs generate discourse and texts aimed at affecting the processes of social constructions (e.g., Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Munir & Phillips, 2005; Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004). Such discursive strategies include two major dimensions. The first dimension involves specification through framing of the existing organizational failing, which includes the diagnosis of the failure and assignment of blame for it. Such specifications lead to the creation of institutional vocabularies, i.e., the use of identifying words and referential texts to expose contradictory institutional logics embedded in existing institutional arrangements (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). The second dimension involves justification of the promoted project as superior to the previous arrangement, involves the institutional entrepreneur de-legitimizing existing institutional arrangements and those supported by opponents (e.g. Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Creed et al., 2002) and legitimating the project at hand to stakeholders and other potential allies (e.g. Déjean et al., 2004; Demil and Bensédine, 2005). The aim is to emphasize the failings of the existing

institutionalized practices and norms and demonstrate that the institutionalization project will assure superior results in order to coalesce allies and reduce inherent contradictions in the coalition while exacerbating contradictions among opponents (e.g., Boxenbaum & Battilana, 2005; Fligstein, 1997; Seo & Creed, 2002). But even as institutional entrepreneurs develop projects that represent a fundamental departure from existing institutional arrangements, institutional entrepreneurs must avoid presenting their projects as too radical to avoid reactions of fear that could discourage potential allies (Marguire & Hardy, 2006; Seo & Creed, 2002).

- (2) *Mobilizing resources*: The success of institutional entrepreneurs depends to a significant extent on their access to, and skills in leveraging scarce and critical resources (Fligstein, 1997; Lawrence et al., 2005). Those skills are needed to mount political action (Seo & Creed, 2002). These resources include tangible sources such as financial assets (Greenwood et al., 2002) as well as cultural and symbolic dimensions such as social capital, legitimacy and formal authority (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Fligstein (1997) suggests that institutional entrepreneurs are likely to be actors with high levels of social capital and can thus use their position to enlist allies. Institutional entrepreneurs must build on established legitimacy, i.e., the extent to which an entrepreneur's actions and values are viewed as consistently congruent with the values and expectations of the larger environment, in order for them to be taken seriously by the stakeholders to whom the project must be articulated (Durand & McGuire, 2005; Rao, Monin and Durand, 2005). Formal authority, i.e., an actor's legitimately recognized right to make decisions (Phillips et al., 2000) is also considered a useful resource for institutional entrepreneurs.

(3) *Designing institutional arrangements*: Instating change in institutions that are in a constant state of flux, it is important that institutional entrepreneurs develop institutional arrangements to stabilize interactions of their participants and ensure that institutions, once diffused, will be maintained (Hwang & Powell, 2005; Jain & George, 2007; Wijen & Ansari, 2007). In doing so, institutional entrepreneurs shape the carriers of institutionalization which include regulative elements (legal provisions that establish and render mandatory new practices) and normative elements (the structuration and professionalization of a field especially if it is an emerging field) (Leca, Battilana & Boxenbaum, 2008).

As stated in Chapter 3, CBOs have played an instrumental role regarding voicing the concerns of minority, marginalized communities with respect to the excessive use of punitive, exclusionary discipline practices within CPS. They advocated for the adoption and the need of RJE practices as a means of replacing zero-tolerance policies, and through this process have become experts on the subject of RJE. Being the harbingers of change efforts, CBOs have been instrumental on one hand, influencing and shaping policy by placing pressure on the district to reform the SCC. On the other hand, CBOs have been working on the ground with schools to help them adopt, implement and subsequently institutionalize RJE. Therefore, CBOs are well suited to serve as institutional entrepreneurs that can catalyze and legitimize change efforts towards RJE. Being external to the CPS institutional environment, CBOs are most suited to influence change and personnel in decision-making capacities, such as personnel in the central district office as well as working closely with principals who are the local school leaders. At the district level, this study will examine how

CBOs work in conjunction with the central district to design institutional arrangements with the objective of expanding and institutionalizing RJE throughout the district.

At the local school level, given the bureaucratic and hierarchical nature of schools being examined, the study will use the institutional entrepreneurship perspective to shed light on how RJE reform is being brought about within schools by examining the various partnerships between CBOs and schools. School principals are the local school leaders who exercise discretion and authority on matters concerning kinds of programming that take place within their schools. Hence, this perspective will help shed light on the kinds of discursive strategies, communication tactics, visual cues and systems and supports for RJE being created by CBOs in conjunction with the school principals at the local school level.

Thorsborne & Blood (2013) have indicated that successful implementation of RJE is heavily dependent on the quality and passion of the leadership in general within the school, wherein leadership is understood as the joint effort of CBOs and school principals bringing in RJE reform within schools. Principals in support of the CBO efforts need to walk the talk, be congruent, surface the concerns, have a good understanding of restorative practices, align policy and practice and deal with adult issues within the school (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). In expending their strategies, the current study has analyzed how partnerships between CBOs and principals operating within an environment of depleting resources, manage to mobilize their scarce resources (both tangible and intangible) to mount political action and gain staff buy in for the continuance and maintenance of RJE.

Innovation Implementation

Often, innovation is vital in changing work environments. An innovation, such as the introduction of RJE, is anything novel to the receiving organization, in this case, schools.

However, organizations and their members often fail to realize the benefits of the innovation

they adopt. The reason is not a failure of the innovation, per se, but implementation failure (Klein & Knight, 2005). Innovation implementation refers to a transitory period, which entails the skilled, consistent and committed use of an innovation within an organization (Klein & Sorra, 1996).

The implementation of such innovations as RJE can be challenging for several reasons. Innovations can be unreliable and may contain design flaws that could frustrate its users (e.g., Klein & Ralls, 1995). Innovations may require users to update their skill sets making it a more tedious process (Aiman-Smith and Green, 2002). Often, innovations decisions are top-down, causing skepticism amongst targeted users regarding the merits of the innovation. Status hierarchies also often get disrupted within organizations, as innovations often require role redefinitions (Klein & Sorra, 1996). Given that implementation is time-consuming and expensive, innovations are likely to create an initial drag on performance that can create resistance. Organizational members also often rigidly adhere to the past, oppose change and strive to maintain status quo (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000). Therefore, Klein and Knight (2005) proposed six key factors that can shape the process and outcomes of the effectiveness of innovation implementation:

1. *Effective packaging of implementation policies and practices* in terms of the quality and quantity of training, the provision of technical assistance; an incentives systems and the quality, accessibility and user friendliness of the innovation itself (Klein & Ralls, 1995).
2. *Organizational climate for innovation* refers to a shared perception of the significance of innovation implementation within an organization.
3. *Managerial support for the innovation* is important to signify to the other employees that the innovation is not a passing managerial fancy.

4. *Financial resource availability* is critical for a continued and consistent use of the innovation by other employees.
5. *Learning orientation* refers to “a set of interrelated practices and beliefs that support and enable employee and organizational skill development, learning and growth” (Klein & Knight 2005, p.245)
6. *Long-term orientation* by managers to employees that in order to achieve long-term benefits of innovation implementation, their unit productivity and efficiency will decline in the short run.

Researchers have pointed to the fact that successfully introducing a new project or program is always difficult, especially at the local school level, which face overworked staff, limited time and resources, as well as pressure to satisfy multiple stakeholders; implementation is an especially daunting task. To fortify RJE, the current study employs the innovation implementation perspective in conjunction with the literature on the nuts and bolts of implementing RJE, to investigate and analyze the critical barriers to implementing RJE and understand the steps taken to overcome barriers.

The Ambiguity-Conflict Model of Policy Implementation

Policy implementation literature has primarily focused on top-down and bottom-up theories. Top-down theorists identified policy designers as central actors and focused analysis on statutes or central orders to ensure faithful implementation of the central policy designs. In contrast, bottom-up theorists such as Lipsky (1978) identified service providers at the local level as central actors/street-level bureaucrats. They argued that policy implementation occurs at two levels: the macro level, where central policy makers create a program, and the micro level, where local service providers interact with target populations. However, researchers have found such schools of thoughts to be delimiting (Howard,

Wrobel, & Nitta, 2010). Therefore, one of the most promising efforts to synthesize top-down and bottom-up implementation approaches while still providing a simple, practical framework has been Matland’s (1995) ambiguity-conflict model.

Matland’s (1995) model of policy implementation attempts to bring organization to the area of policy research by focusing on the characteristics of a policy. He has created a two-by-two matrix based on the level ambiguity and conflict of a particular policy to determine whether a top-down or bottom-up approach will provide a “more comprehensive and coherent basis for understanding implementation” (Matland 1995, p. 155). The level of policy conflict influences the implementation process by making it more difficult to implement the policy successfully. The degree of ambiguity in goals and/or means affects how policy actors perceive the policy across implementation locations and increases the likelihood of local conditions being more important in successful implementation (Howard, Wrobel, & Nitta, 2010). Figure 7 presents the four-cell matrix of the ambiguity-conflict model, with each cell representing a different type of implementation approach.

		CONFLICT	
		LOW	HIGH
AMBUGUITY	LOW	Administrative Implementation Resources	Political Implementation Power
	HIGH	Experimental Implementation Contextual Conditions	Symbolic Implementation Coalition Strength

Figure 7: Ambiguity-Conflict Matrix: Policy Implementation Processes (Source: Matland, 1995, p. 160)

With administrative implementation, the policy is characterized as having low policy ambiguity and low policy conflict. Further, there is clear acknowledgement of both the policy goals and means for achieving them. In this type of implementation, the outcomes or success of the policy are directly related to providing enough resources. In political implementation, the policy has low ambiguity and high conflict, since the goals of the policy though understood, are in dispute. The success of the implementation usually is determined by the power of policy actors to force the policy on the stakeholders. For policies classified in these two categories, a top-down approach to implementation would provide more guidance for the policy actors involved.

When a policy has high levels of ambiguity and low levels of conflict, Matland portrays it as experimental implementation. Successful implementation depends greatly on the contextual conditions, with disparities likely to emerge from place to place. In symbolic implementation, characterizing the policy are high levels of ambiguity and conflict. For this type of policy, successful outcomes are often, “determined by the coalition of actors at the local level who control the available resources” (Matland 1995, p.168). Policies that fall into these two categories can often be informed by the bottom-up implementation literature in understanding the barriers to successful implementation.

This study applies the ambiguity-conflict model for better understanding of the implementation processes of the changes in CPS district policy surrounding discipline and conflict. The study examines the implementation process and the perception of its success by groups of stakeholders at the district and individual school levels throughout CPS.

Identifying the level of policy conflict and policy ambiguity for each group of stakeholders will allow a better understanding of how the implementation process will unfold given the conditions for success. According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013), properly worked-through

policy that involves staff, students and parents in the process will provide an air of legitimacy and the knowledge that ‘this is not going away’! Policy change should ideally come after a time of experimentation and after it makes sense since if policy change is instated too soon, then it will evoke resistance.

Diffusion of Innovation

Rogers (1995, p. 5) defines diffusion as “the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system”. Innovations create uncertainty and because it creates discomfort, individuals seek information about the new idea and its capacity to solve problems from their peers (Rogers, 2003). Innovation takes time to implement and its rate of adoption is dependent on a range of factors. Adoption is a decision to make full use of an innovation as the best course of action available (Rogers, 2003)¹⁰. The five stages of the decision-making process are 1) knowledge (exposure to its existence, and understanding of its functions), 2) persuasion (the forming of a favorable attitude to it), 3) decision (commitment to its adoption), 4) implementation (putting it to use) and 5) confirmation (reinforcement based on positive outcomes from it).

The rate of change or how quickly an innovation diffuses is affected by the rate of adoption of the innovation or uptake by members of an organization. Rogers (2003) outlines five variables that affect the rate of change: perceived attributes of the innovation, the social system, how the decision was made, change agent activity and communication about the innovation. For the purpose of this study, reference has been made to two critical components of this perspective, 1) the perceived attributes of an innovation which signal the

¹⁰ Please note that the use of the term adoption by Roger’s (2003) is different from the decision to adopt RJE, as highlighted in the previous section

diffusion process of RJE, and 2) moving beyond implementation, which focuses on RJE's confirmation, sustainability and re-invention.

Perceived attributes of an innovation

Innovations are often difficult to diffuse and spread within an organization and more so it is important to gauge whether service providers are excited at the prospect of the innovation to find solutions. Thus, the following five qualities or attributes often determine the success of an innovation's diffusion or integration within a system (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013; Rogers, 2003):

1. *Relative advantage*: The innovation needs to be better or more effective than what already exists. The implementation of restorative practices should add value and uniquely address issues of school misconduct, distinctively from other related SEL initiatives as well as the traditional, punitive sanctions.
2. *Compatibility with existing values and practices*: Schools that have values that closely align with the restorative values and those values are explicitly expressed in daily behaviors are the schools that have less resistance to RJE.
3. *Complexity*: This refers to the ease of use of an innovation in terms of how quickly it is understood and put into practice. Appropriate and consistent training on RJE concepts will help members of the staff, grasp the concepts better and, and see how it aligns with their existing practices.
4. *Triability*: Refers to the degree to which experimentation can occur. Successful integration and diffusion of restorative practices involves starting with a small section of the school that has the opportunity to experiment, to establish what works and what doesn't work and develop best practices.

5. *Observability*: Finally, the benefits of the implementation must be clearly observable to others. This is where restorative practices excel, as one will be easily won over when they see and experience the change in behavior and attitudes through one of the many RJE processes. Sharing the stories and the impact RJE has had on data is vital throughout the diffusion process.

Innovations, in this case RJE that are perceived by individuals as having greater relative advantage, compatibility, triability, and observability and less complexity will be adopted more rapidly than other innovations. As previously stated in the literature, time is of the essence to bring about a shift in mindset and the overall school culture. Thus those bringing about RJE reform within schools can carefully examine whether RJE encompasses these five attributes, which in turn could help speed up the rate of diffusion and integration within schools.

Beyond Implementation

According to Rogers (2003), the implementation stage may continue for a lengthy period of time based on the nature of the innovation. Eventually, it will reach a point at which the new idea becomes institutionalized/integrated as a regularized part of an adopter's ongoing operations. The innovation loses its distinctive quality as the separate identity of the new idea disappears. Ideally, we consider this point the end of the implementation stage. Refinement or confirmation is about the continual change process and attention to detail of quality and sustainable practice (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). At this stage, implementation will be well embedded and there will be an emerging concern about sustaining change and how to keep it alive within the school.

An important factor in explaining the degree to which an innovation is sustained is participation (Green, 1986) in terms of the level of engagement of a school's members in

designing, discussing and implementing an innovation. If the innovation-decision is an authority decision, with only a few powerful individuals involved, and if these authorities happen to leave the school, sustainability of the innovation is at risk. Collective innovation-decisions usually have greater sustainability than do authority innovation-decision, due to wider participation in them (Rogers, 2003). Schools that develop sustainable practice have a long-term plan for ongoing professional development of staff and for bringing new staff on board (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013).

Further the degree to which an innovation is re-invented is positively related to the innovation's sustainability. When schools' members change an innovation as they adopt it, they begin to regard it as their own, and more likely to continue it over time, even when the initial special resources are withdrawn or diminish. Re-invention brings about flexibility in adopting an innovation and may reduce mistakes and encourage customization of the innovation to fit the local and/or changing conditions. Thus, this re-invention process makes adopters active participants as they strive to give meaning to the new idea as the innovation is applied to their local context (Rogers, 2003). However, re-invention of an innovation has the potential to distort the original core elements or features of the innovation, thereby bringing in concerns surrounding fidelity of the innovation (Kelly et al., 2000). Nonetheless the research on sustainability indicates that an innovation at a school is always vulnerable to discontinuance especially if the innovation is found to be ineffective at a later point in time.

Schools that are doing well with RJE diffusion and integration usually have a core team/steering group/implementation team that leads and drives the change. Message management is a vital part of communicating the vision. Each social system has its own set of norms and established patterns of behavior among its members. In this instance, every school has its own culture and sub-cultures within it. The diffusion of RJE will challenge

these norms and established behaviors, increasing the likelihood of resistance to change when the status quo is threatened. Once staff members are convinced that restorative practice supports school improvement, a re-invention or re-alignment of policy and procedure needs to be created, so that all staff are obliged to follow and RJE better fits the school context. This will be particularly important for those who need a degree of pressure to enable that shift. The more restorative/relational a school becomes, the more urgency there is to align all processes and people to operate restoratively/relationally (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). This is the stage when RJE implementation is well embedded, setting the stage for RJE's confirmation and sustainability.

However, the diffusion of innovation framework has come under some scrutiny. This "efficient-choice" perspective perpetuates pro-innovation biases and elements that exist outside of the organizations like funding agencies and regulatory bodies and the numbers of other organization can create "bandwagon pressures" to other organizations within this group (Rogers, 1962, 1983; Kimberly, 1981; Rogers, 1983; Abrahamson, 1991). These outside forces, based on the level of dependency and legitimacy that organizations seek from them, can impel the imitation of adoption of innovations as fads or fashions (Carroll et al., 1988; DiMaggio, 1987; Scott, 1987).

The politics, which drove reform efforts in the past, are still operative, now strengthened by top-down government mandates (Payne, 2008). As stated previously, national mandates have been issued to minimize the over usage of discriminatory exclusionary disciplinary sanctions and make way for RJE (Evans & Vaandering, 2016). Within CPS, substantial alterations have been made to the SCC to use suspensions as the last resort and provide clear guidance on instructive, corrective and restorative responses (CPS Office of College & Career Success, June 2014). Across the city of Chicago, powerful

players like CPS, CASEL, Cook County officials, Woods Fund and the Mayor's commission, are backing the adoption of RJE. Such pressures faced by school administrators can lead to the diffusion of RJE as fads or fashions that may not have major utility value within schools and only fulfill symbolic functions such as 'signaling innovating' by imitating other organizations of high repute and popularity (Abrahamson, 1986; Fombrun, 1987; Hirsch, 1972).

Furthermore, given that schools implement new initiatives with great regularity, staff is thought to be resistant to any new practice because, in reality, they know that this 'fad' will pass and before long they will be required to implement something else. According to Payne (2008, p.168), pessimism is pervasive within urban schools owing to the frequency with which, "programs and policies have been oversold and under-thought-out, adopted with exaggerated hopes, expanded at unrealistic rates, and then jettisoned for reasons as specious as the ones for which they were adopted".

All these aspects lean more towards a holistic integration of RJE in conjunction with other non-exclusionary SEL initiatives rather than another behavior management program as a part of discipline, that is a current 'fad', that will fade with time and get coopted within mainstream punitive justice. Individuals need to view RJE beyond conflict resolution, and needs to redefine discipline within schools, for a truly authentic shift to occur because otherwise a piecemeal fashion of RJE integration will not make the school inherently restorative (Daly, 2002; Vaandering, 2010).

Interaction of theoretical frameworks

As specified above, an institutional entrepreneur, such CBOs, can serve as a catalyst for change/reform within their schools. They decide how and why certain kinds of reform efforts ought to be adopted and subsequently implemented within their schools, based on

their assessment of the school's need. Thus, in the case of the current study, it is important to examine under what conditions and what kinds of decisions making led to the adoption of RJE, and institutional entrepreneurship literature provides a framework for studying that. However, as stated in the innovation implementation literature, the decision to adopt new programming is only the first step. The implementation of RJE will fail if people do not know the purpose of the change initiative or what the school is hoping to achieve (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Furthermore, the institutional entrepreneurs have an important role to play in entrenching the worth of RJE at their school. Hence learning about the nuts and bolts in how an innovation such as RJE implementation within schools and unrelenting support from the administration is imperative for RJE to become routine practice. It is also important to keep in mind that principals are the formal authority figures within schools and that RJE CBO experts are assisting schools implement and integrate RJE. This collaborative venture between schools and CBOs has been explored through all phases of RJE adoption, implementation and subsequent integration.

For restorative practices to move towards mainstream acceptance, it is imperative that RJE meets and addresses a genuine need; that it does not come at a great risk to the majority; and that restorative practices becomes part of the language and 'the way we do things' (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). With the recent changes being brought about at the policy level, Matland's (1995) policy implementation framing would serve as a useful guide to understand how top-down policy actors influence schools to implement RJE. However, as stated by Thorsborne & Blood (2013), change must not be viewed as impositional since it is likely to lead to resistance. Thus, Matland's (1995) framing will help with regards to understanding how local level actors respond to changes in policy and what a bottom-up approach to RJE looks like. Drawing from Rogers (2003) diffusion of innovation

perspective, an innovation will not be confirmed unless it can be re-invented to suit the setting. Further, the degree to which RJE is re-invented and the degree to which adopting schools modify RJE as it diffuses is positively related to the sustainability of RJE. Thus, the heart of the diffusion process lies in subjective evaluations of an innovation flow mainly through interpersonal networks (Rogers, 2003; Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Integrating RJE involves building support for restorative values and for the new mission, articulating new goals and objectives for intervention, reallocating resources, redesigning job descriptions, developing new reporting measures and data collection systems, and giving priority to new programs and practices (Umbreit et al., 2005; Johnstone, 2002). The diffusion of innovation framework will also guide my analysis with regards to whether such reform efforts will be sustained and reinvented within schools without falling prey to the accountability pressures and competing priorities faced by individual schools.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

Based on the review of related literature and the theoretical frameworks outlined in the previous chapters, the two major research questions of the study are:

- (1) In what manner is RJE being adopted at both the CPS central district level and across public high schools?
- (2) What are the specific factors and processes that aid in the successful implementation of RJE across public high schools?
- (3) How and to what degree is RJE getting diffused and integrated across public high schools?

A qualitative research paradigm was chosen for the purpose of maximizing depth of understanding (as opposed to breadth), which is crucial for addressing the relational, process-oriented questions addressed in this study. Qualitative research assumes that the world is highly subjective and is in need of interpretation and measuring, the research process is exploratory, inductive and is focused on process, and I do not manipulate variables but observes and interprets life in a naturalistic setting (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Merriam, 1998). The study positions my epistemology as drawing on the qualitative constructivist paradigm wherein knowledge is socially constructed and emerges from the way people make sense of their world. In the current study, the core interest is in understanding a service provider's perspective, i.e., school practitioners entrusted with undertaking the task of implementing and integrating RJE programming within their schools.

The chapter has been divided into the following subsections i) Rationale for a Multiple Case Study Approach, ii) Rationale for site selection, iii) Data collection process,

which entails the sampling strategy, recruitment strategy and sources of data collected, iv) Data Management & Analysis, v) Establishing rigor, vi) Reflexivity statement and limitations of the study and, vii) A description of each of the shortlisted school contexts.

Rationale for Qualitative Multiple Case Study Approach

The study employs a qualitative multiple/comparative case studies approach seeking to build evidence by comparing cases with similar features, i.e., public high schools that are engaged in RJE programming, currently in partnership with affiliated CBOs (Yin, 1994; 2003). Thus the unit of analysis is each individual public high school. Merriam (1998) conceives a qualitative case study as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit” (p. xiii). She further stresses on its unique distinctive attributes: Particularistic (it focuses on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon), i.e., the RJE approach within each high school; Descriptive (it yields a rich, thick description of the phenomenon under study), i.e., providing details regarding the adoption, implementation and integration process of RJE within schools; Heuristic (it illuminates the reader’s understanding of phenomenon under study), i.e., comparing how and why RJE pans out across different school contexts.

Case study research should rest upon multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and benefit from prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data analysis and collection (Yin, 1994, 2003). He suggests to make use of six evidentiary sources: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artifacts, each of which has its own strengths and weaknesses. The current study utilized multiple sources of data that include interviews, observations, discipline statistics, contract documents, media documents and CBO brochures. Merriam (1998) states that owing to its strengths, case study is a particularly

appealing design for applied fields of study such as education and has proven particularly useful for studying educational innovations, for evaluating programs, and for informing policy. Yin (2003) points out that this design is a common design used to study school innovations in which individual schools adopt some innovation, but information is sought about common design experiences across school sites. This befits the current educational study context wherein the RJE innovation is being examined within and across schools.

The case study as a comprehensive research strategy offers several benefits. The decision to focus on qualitative case studies stems from the fact that this design is chosen precisely because researchers are interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing. Case study is a particularly suitable design if you are interested in process, which is the case in the current study. The ability of the case study to answer "how" and "why", questions within real-world contexts is an important strength (Trickett, 1984, 1994). The real-world context in the present study refers to the growing significance of RJE in the chosen research site, which has also brought about a change in school district policy that governs practice within schools.

A multiple/comparative case study design has all of the advantages of a single case design in capturing real-world contexts, but in repeating the procedures on multiple cases. This replication enhances the validity and generalizability of the findings (Galloway & Sheridan, 1993). Furthermore, in analyzing and interpreting multiple case designs, each case should be viewed as if it were a separate experiment, rather than a single sampling unit, thereby following a replicating logic (Yin, 1994). Furthermore, the qualitative multiple case study approach can help strengthen the precision, the validity, and the stability of the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Site Selection

Chicago was chosen as the site for the current study, partly because of convenience of location, but more so because of the changes in the broader institutional environment, that provided credence to the fact that RJE adoption and implementation is on the rise across the CPS district.

Data Collection Process: Sample, Recruitment strategy and sources of data

Yin (1994) emphasizes the necessity that researchers review the relevant literature and include theoretical propositions regarding the case under study before starting to conduct any data collection, which distinguishes it from such methodologies as grounded theory and ethnography. The literature review and theoretical propositions of the study definitely aided the data collection process and research design in this study.

According to Merriam (1998), decisions about the unit of analysis have implications for resources, time frames and data collection options. The selection of units of analysis also has implications for the staging and sequencing of data collection, analysis and synthesis steps in the case study. Such was the case in the current study, wherein a two-phased purposive sampling technique was undertaken. Researchers use purposive sampling to “discover, understand, gain insight; therefore one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most” (Merriam, 1998, p. 48; Patton, 1990). The rationale behind two stages of data collection was because details obtained from phase I, i.e. from the affiliated CBOs, helped me decide which subsequent schools the study needed to sample in phase II. Emphasis will now be laid on each stage’s sampling procedure, the way the sample was recruited and the kinds of data gathering tools employed.

Phase I: Key Informants: Affiliated Community Based Organizations & Central District Personnel

1. Affiliated Community Based Organizations

Sampling & Recruitment Strategy

Through preliminary fieldwork undertaken, I am came to learn that the overarching format within CPS for implementing RJE is for schools to form partnerships with CBOs, since those particular CBOs are viewed as experts on RJE. It was observed that CBOs who form partnerships with schools provide myriad RJE services such as establishing peace rooms, conducting reactive and proactive RJE practices, training, conducting workshops, engaging in professional development and providing technical assistance.

Utilizing the network that I had built through preliminary fieldwork, I engaged in a broad mapping of various CBOs across Chicago by obtaining databases and membership lists maintained by the Illinois Judicial Council, IBARJ, ICJIA, The Enlace Chicago Network and the Adler Institute of Professional Psychology. Forty such organizations that are advocating for the expansion of RJE within Chicago were identified. Out of this list, nine CBOs were chosen as the final sample, since these organizations were found to be partnering with specific CPS high schools. An expedited University of Chicago IRB approval was obtained for phase 1 of the data collection process, prior to reaching out to the final shortlist of CBOs.

A recruitment email specifying details of the study and seeking participation was sent to the executive directors and/or program managers of the shortlisted CBOs. A follow-up phone call was made to those agencies that did not respond to my email. All nine agencies agreed to participate.

Sources of Data Collected

The primary tool of data collection utilized was in-person semi-structured interviews. A specific date, time and location were setup with program managers of the specific agencies. Majority of the interviews took place at the participant's respective agencies usually in their offices or at a conference room, barring two interviews that took place at coffee shops. Prior to each interview, I walked the participants through a consent form, which highlighted the study details and made them sign off on agreeing to participate in the study. A digital audio recorder was utilized to capture details of the interview conversation only after having received the participants' consent. The data collection took place between June and August 2015.

The purpose of the interview was to learn about the nature and intensity of partnerships that the affiliated CBOs had with their partnering high school(s). Specifically, with regards to RJE programming and learning more about their organization and their foray into RJE, process of partnering with schools, their successes and challenges in working within schools, their relationship with the central district office and what the overall scope of RJE was within CPS. In addition to gathering interview data, the respective program managers/ executive directors also completed the Levels of Organizational Integration Rubric (LOIR), a standardized assessment rubric that highlights the depth of their collaborative engagement with each high school¹¹. The scale included measures ranging from Independent (I), Network (N), Cooperating(C), Partnering (P), and Unifying (U). They

¹¹ As adapted from the Strategic Alliance Formative Assessment Rubric; see Gajda, R. (2004). Utilizing collaboration theory to evaluate strategic alliances. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 25, 1, 65-77

also completed a tabulation matrix on specific school aspects such as their year (s) of partnership, their frequency of contact with schools, nature of RJE practices conducted, setting up of a peace room, presence of an RJE coordinator, number of trainings conducted, duration of training and funding sources for their RJE work carried out at their specific partnering schools (See attached interview protocol in Appendix A). I also requested the interview participants to pass on their contract documents to enable review and analysis of the Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) that were set up between the CBO and specific schools. Only two agencies, the Cherry Center and the Dynamic Center agreed to send me a sample of their contract documents and each blurred out their financial details (Refer to Appendix B).

2. Central District Office Personnel

Whilst interviewing with the various CBO program managers, several of them mentioned that I ought to establish contact with personnel at the CPS Central District Office. CBO personnel specified that they worked closely with the executive directors at the OSEL and Office of Safety & Security (OS&S). Thus, I decided to include the central district personnel perspective into the study. Using established CBO contacts, I sent out emails to the executive directors of the offices referenced above and managed to schedule two telephone interviews in August 2015. In January 2016, I was informed that the former head of the OSEL had become the head of CASEL. Thus, I wanted to gain the current OSEL executive director's perspective and was successful in scheduling an in-person interview at her office located in the Central Office in downtown Chicago. The interview questions focused on understanding how the central district office was supporting the expansion of RJE within schools and trying to gauge their successes and challenges in doing so (Refer to Appendix C).

Phase II: Chicago Public High Schools

Sampling & Recruitment Strategy

Upon analyzing the data received from the affiliated community partners it was observed that only four major agencies (including one consortium of agencies) were in active partnerships with multiple high schools across Chicago. Thus, a matrix of a shortlist of schools was created based on two dimensions:

1. Partnership Modality: Findings from phase I pointed to the fact that there were largely two types of partnership contexts:

- Outsourced: This is a type of partnership context, wherein CBOs undertake RJE programming on behalf of schools, since they believe that schools are over-burdened institutions and cannot implement RJE on their own. Only two out the nine agencies, were found to be in active partnership with their specific schools and engaged in outsourced work for schools. These agencies were Blossom Center and Cherry Center¹².
- Independent: This type of partnership context contends that RJE programming should to be carried out by schools themselves, wherein CBOs build systems and structures, create in-school capacity and have a clear exit strategy to discontinue their engagement with schools. Only two out the nine agencies, were found to be in active partnership with their specific schools and engaged in building in-school capacity. These agencies were Harmony Consortium and Dynamic Center.

2. Geographical School Location: The historical racial and subsequent economic segregation that exists in the city of Chicago has implications for the level of school

¹² Original names of all CBOs and schools have been replaced by pseudonyms

functioning that exists within CPS (Payne, 2008). Wherein, schools largely located on Chicago's north side have greater resource allocation compared to schools located in the south and west Chicago, in which the communities are more socially and economic disadvantaged and have higher rates of crime. Thus, using school resource allocation as a proxy for race and class, I wanted to understand whether geographical school location would impact the uptake of RJE programming.

Using these two major dimensions of the matrix led to a final shortlist of eight schools. The study focused on two schools within each quadrant to enable back-up options for each quadrant based on the willingness of school's participation. The inclusion criteria for the final shortlist was that each of the schools selected was a neighborhood school type, grades 9-12, primarily located and serving socially disadvantaged students, were partnering with a CBO and, had been implementing RJE for a minimum of 2.5 to 3 years ¹³.

I underwent rigorous IRB reviews with both the University of Chicago SSA/Chapin Hall and the CPS Research Review Board prior to contacting my shortlist of eight schools. CPS laid out conditions for collecting primary data within schools and required that I receive final approval from the respective school principals. I thus used the assistance of the established contact built with CBOs earlier and asked the respective CBO personnel to introduce me via email to their affiliated school partner principal. Based on the principals email responses, I setup preliminary in-person meetings with four high school principals representing each quadrant. During preliminary conversations with the four school principals, it emerged that one high school had since discontinued its partnership with the

¹³ Morrison, Blood & Thorsborne's (2006) research highlights that schools should envision a three to five year overall implementation timeframe to consolidate the change process, with shorter timeframes marking important milestones.

affiliated CBO and two of the four principals were serving as interim principals. Upon conferring with my dissertation committee, although not ideal, a decision to continue recruiting participants from these schools despite the prior criteria since it became evident that these schools were more reflective of the on-the ground context and reality that takes place at CPS became plausible. Therefore, following a decision to include them in the study, I availed more study details to them alongside the requirements in terms of participants and other requests; I received permission to conduct the study within these four schools. In addition, the principals requested that I would provide them written reports about their respective school's progress on implementing RJE.

Within each high school, there was an in-depth discussion with the respective school principals on the goal of the study to conduct in depth semi-structured interviews with approximately 15 school personnel, so that they represented each of the brackets provided below:

- a) The administration staff comprising of principals, assistant principals, and deans
- b) Teaching staff across various grades and subjects (including special education)
- c) Non-teaching staff comprising of the school counselors, school social workers, restorative justice coordinators (mostly appointed from the affiliated CBO partner)
- d) Support staff such as safety and security officers, police officers, lead custodian staff, chief engineer and lunchroom managers.

The principal and I decided that the principal would introduce me to the rest of their staff by way of email introductions, to enable follow-up and setup individual appointments with various personnel based on their willingness to participate. I thus created a recruitment email and began reaching out to individual participants across all four-school sites

simultaneously. The final shortlist of participants who agreed to participate in this study is provided in the table below based on the two-dimensional sampling strategy employed.

Table 2: Study sampling frame

		Geographical School Location	
		South/West Side	North Side
Partnership Modality	Outsourced	West Shore High School former partnership with Blossom Center ¹⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Assistant Principal • Dean • RJ Coordinator/School Social Worker • Counselor • Student Advocate (Dean Support) • Student Intervention (Data Specialist) • Teachers (3) • Security • Police officers • Lunchroom Manager • Custodian • Chief Engineer 	Somerset Academy partnering with Cherry Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Assistant Principal • Dean • RJ Coordinator (Agency) • School Social Worker • Counselors (2) • Teachers (3) • Behavioral Health Specialist (Agency) • Security • Police officers (2) • Lunchroom Manager • Custodian • Chief Engineer
	Independent	Timber High School partnering with Harmony Consortium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Assistant Principal • Dean (Former) • RJ Coordinator (Agency) • School Social Worker • Teachers (4) • Case Manager • Security • Police Officers (2) • Custodian • Chief Engineer • Lunchroom Manager 	Sunshine High School partnering with Dynamic Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Assistant Principal • Dean • RJ Coordinator (Agency) • School Social Worker • Teachers (3) • Security • Police Officers (2) • Health Clinic Advocate (Agency) • Custodian • Lunchroom Manager

¹⁴ Westshore High School has discontinued their erstwhile partnership with the Blossom Center for reasons that shall be substantiated in the following chapters.

Sources of Data Collected

The primary tool of data collection was in-person semi-structured interviews. Multiple interview protocols were created for each bracket of school employee targeted. Prior to each interview, I walked the participants through a consent form, which highlighted the study details and requested each respondent to sign upon agreeing to participate in the study. A digital audio recorder was utilized to capture details of the interview conversation only after having received the participants' consent. In addition, observations of verbal and non-verbal cues, appearance, tone, and personality were noted. These notes were written down immediately after each interview; they assisted with remembering what occurred and were less obtrusive than taking notes during the actual interview (Glaser, 1978). The data collection at the four schools took place from November 2015 to June 2016 (post gaining IRB approvals) and entailed multiple visits to each school site and conducting interviews within the respective school buildings, at a time and location of their choice. Emphasis was laid on conducting interviews without disrupting regular school instruction and within the employees' contracted time schedules.

By getting varying perspectives from multiple organizational actors within each school setting, the interviews were focused on understanding what the everyday disciplinary practices looked like within their school and how they conceptualized their overall school climate and culture. The common themes addressed within each interview included a school climate and culture assessment, school safety and disciplinary strategies and specific questions on RJE such as RJE adoption decision, implementation responsibilities, kinds of training undertaken, impact evaluation and scope of RJE at their school. The administrative rung of school personnel were specifically probed to understand RJE's value add amongst the constellation of other SEL initiatives at their school. The RJE coordinators (appointed by

the affiliated CBO partner) were specifically questioned on their duties and responsibilities within the school (See Appendix D for interview protocols).

In addition to these interviews, I received permission to be a participant observer in at least one monthly Climate and Culture group meeting within high schools to understand the school wide policy and practice decisions discussed. Participant observation was conducted to record information about the setting, the participants, activities and interactions, and other subtle factors of pertinence to the research (e.g., informal or unplanned activities, nonverbal communication, etc.) (Merriam, 1998). Stake (1995) identifies an important consideration with respect to the observation of the physical space. He asserts that entryways, classrooms, the landscape, the hallways, decoration, etc., are important to give the reader of the case a sense of “being there” (p. 63). The current study paid attention to some of the contexts described since the purposes of the case were instrumental. Finally, following Yin’s (1994) suggestion, I observed the physical condition of the school as a possible indicator of the school’s climate. Archival data about each school was also obtained from sources like the official CPS website, media reports and aggregate discipline data; so as receive multiple sources of data for triangulation.

Data Management & Analysis

All the interviews were digitally recorded, professionally transcribed and downloaded into AtlasTi, a software package that was used to facilitate data management and analysis. All interview transcriptions were de-identified and assigned a study ID number. Names, addresses, phone numbers, and other identifying information were kept separately on a password-protected computer, which only I had access.

Merriam (1998) asserts that in case study research, data analysis proceed as they are collected. During this phase of the analysis, I developed more analytical questions additional to those formulated in the interview protocols, especially with the school administrators. I also engaged in extensive memoing and wrote critical comments next to notes taken during interviews, observations and document analyses; by constantly linking data collected to theoretical, methodological, and critical issues related to the topic under study. On reaching saturation with the data collection efforts, the research proceeded to the next stage of intensive analysis, as suggested by Merriam (1998) and Stake (1995).

Following Merriam's (1998) recommendations of a multiple case study approach, the study deployed two stages of intensive analysis: within-case and cross-case analyses. According to Padgett (2008), developing summaries of all available data about the case is an important first step in distilling and managing the data. Description is the foundation of interpretation and theory development; therefore researchers write descriptive case studies of each informant of the research (Gilgun, 2015)¹⁵. The study analyzed each individual transcript by adopting an analytical iterative technique known as the Sort and Sift, Think & Shift Approach (Maietta, 2006)¹⁶. Using this analytical technique, I created an episode profile for each data collection episode, i.e., identified power quotations (direct quotations that stand out from the transcripts), created summary memos about each quotation and began

¹⁵ Given that I had interviewed multiple participants across both phases of my data collection, I developed multiple descriptive narratives for each individual interview transcript.

¹⁶ An analytical technique that entails 4 major process tasks 1) **Diving In** which helps understand the properties, dimensions and flow in one's data (i.e., episode profile creation) 2) **Stepping Back** which focuses on data mining of episode profiles 3) **Return to Diving In** wherein one layers in revised strategies that were informed by initial learning period of data interrogation and 4) **Round 2 of Stepping Back** to make better decisions for how to refine and make analytic processes more effective

preparing initial code categories using inductive and deductive techniques.¹⁷ Codes guided by theoretical propositions as asserted by Yin (1994), were initially used to deductively cut and analyze the data, and then coding followed an inductive data driven process (Patton, 2002) across multiple episode profiles. Data from the secondary sources were triangulated with the data from the primary sources. Codes from Phase 1 of the data collection process formed the contextual background of the study. Coding of each embedded episode profile led to higher level analytic coding and the preparation of a code list for each individual case, i.e., each Chicago public high school. This within-case analysis set the stage for cross-case analysis/synthesis.

After finishing with the analysis of each individual case, the cross-case analysis/synthesis in this study attempted to develop a more precise description, analysis, and interpretation of the process of adoption, implementation and integration of RJE across four Chicago public high schools. Pattern matching or the replication logic technique was utilized, wherein each case was carefully selected so that it either (a) predicted similar results (a literal replication) or (b) predicted contrasting results but for anticipatable reasons (a theoretical replication). By paying close attention to the fact that the analysis stays very close to evidence, cross-case synthesis led to the creation of a typology of individual cases, for instance understanding which schools implement RJE as a part of discipline versus schools that implement RJE as a part of their SEL initiatives.

¹⁷ The episode profile primarily answers two major questions, 1) What did I learn from the data collection episode and 2) Why is the data collection episode important to the study? At least five power quotations were identified per transcript and a brief memo was created to answer the question, why I had chosen that quotation.

Rather than settle with merely a description of the attributes, the study employed an explanation building technique (Yin, 2009) to iteratively explain the link between initial theoretical explanations about the RJ integration process (Aronson, 1995). Triangulation was also used to check and strengthen answers to causal questions, for example, by identifying and/or ruling out alternative explanations (e.g. other SEL initiatives being distinctive from RJE), or by identifying and explaining exceptions to the main pattern observed (Yin, 2009). Other frequently used techniques in case study research, the time-series analysis and logic models were also utilized in this study (Yin, 2009). Logic models deliberately stipulate a complex chain of events over an extended period of time and consist of matching empirically observed events to theoretically predicted events. Such techniques were used to investigate the chronology of events for presumed causal events, in terms of how and why RJE was adopted within specific schools and the staged sequence of implementing RJ into schools. With regards to presenting the data, each single case was illustrated anonymously and included separate narratives presented thematically. For example, full descriptions of the sites to acquaint the reader with a sense of being there, was followed by descriptions, analyses, and interpretations of the findings framed by the conceptual categories in which data were coded when collected. This method helped the cross-case comparisons because the same conceptual categories were examined in each single case following the same fashion.

Establishing Rigor

The research followed a few strategies to validate the trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility of the findings throughout the data collection and analysis process (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Prior to data collection, I reviewed multiple interview protocols with committee members to detect possible biases or questions that may lead participants to answer in a certain way. During data collection, I was intentional about

spending sufficient time in the field, so that the study participants become more comfortable with the interview. I also maintained open, transparent communication with the respondents regarding the study, which helped establish rapport with the participants, thereby evoking honest responses from them.

A third party transcribed all the interviews. However, after receiving each transcript, I simultaneously read and listened to each interview while going through the transcript to ensure accuracy of content and spelling. The study then pursued triangulation of the data sources to draw multiple perspectives of the same phenomena. The study uses rich, thick description to convey the findings, by helping contextualize the various school settings for the readers. I also sought regular insights from the committee members and discussed aspects such as issues during data collection, categories, themes, variations in the data, and analytic strategies adopted, which helped strengthen the development of themes and conceptual frameworks. Negative case analysis is traditional in theory-guided qualitative research (Gilgun, 2014). This involves the active search for evidence that adds to, contradicts, and undermines the emerging analysis. In order to test the theoretical propositions, I would view them against negative or rival cases that did not support the theory (Patton, 2001). The study adopted Padgett's (1998b) strategy of auditing, which refers to creating a paper trail of field notes, transcripts of interviews, journals, and memos documenting decisions made along the way. In addition, the study embraced transparency about design procedures and the decisions made along the way.

The evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). Multiple case studies represent an improvement over single case studies due to the replication inherent in the design, which enhances confidence in the generalizability of the

findings or external validity. Internal validity, or the extent to which the reported findings accurately reflect the concept under investigation, is an additional methodological concern for case study research. Once again, replication is the key to confidence in the findings. Further, I have been mindful of, and transparent about, data collection, how individual biases might have impacted this process, how and when I engaged individual subjectivity in the analysis process (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

Role of the researcher and study limitations

My individual curiosity in the subject of RJE stemmed from an underlying interest in the field of juvenile justice, and got heightened further upon learning of its popularity at a youth violence prevention seminar that held at the University of Chicago. It was surprising to learn of its potential for expansion across Chicago, as believed by multiple stakeholders in the field of youth violence prevention- CBOs, schools, court officials, law enforcement amongst others who were present at the seminar. Given my apprehensions regarding RJE being the panacea for youth violence prevention efforts especially in urban inner-city public schools; I embarked on the current study to understand how and why the momentum of RJE was growing. Before plunging into formal data collection procedures, it was imperative to conduct preliminary fieldwork and develop familiarity with the RJE context in Chicago and establish connects with CBOs and school practitioners. Being a researcher from the University of Chicago definitely opened multiple doors. While establishing connects, someone suggested a shift in focus away from public to charter/private schools, which seemingly adopt RJE more willingly. Arguably the race and class disproportionality that is endemic within poorly resourced schools, need RJE the most, but are less likely to successfully implement it. This was the aspect the study was most keen on exploring given my inherent bias about the potential of the RJE innovation in urban, inner city public schools context.

Qualitative researchers doing research in education contexts have special ethical responsibilities towards school practitioners. Therefore, the study opted to be open, clear and transparent about procedures with CBOs and school practitioners. However, despite establishing clear lines of communication with the participants, the study encountered some challenges and limitations in the field. First, given that schools are hierarchical institutions and that principals are essentially the decision-makers for their schools, it was difficult to exercise a lot of discretion with regards to whom to interview. Having made the criteria of my known to principals (especially in terms of getting mixed opinions about RJE from practitioners), principals would often assign school personnel to me. This situation evoked two kinds of scenarios: 1) in some school contexts, there is a lot of mistrust between the administration and other school practitioners. Given that contact with participants occurred through the principals, practitioners often viewed the interviewer as someone who represented the administration, thereby raising their suspicions, and 2) power dynamics exist within school buildings, wherein I often found that practitioners, especially those in the lower rungs of hierarchy, availed socially desirable positive responses regarding the overall functioning of their school and often, waxed eloquent about their administration and often did not permit audio recording of interviews. To overcome some of these concerns, it became imperative to establish a good rapport with the respondents, and assured them of maintaining their privacy and confidentiality of information. Secondly, concerns regarding how practitioners viewed me in the field given my status as a female, colored, international student especially as several school practitioners were white. My status may have potentially affected their responses, however overall learning about the receptivity to the study was pleasantly surprising.

Thirdly, interviewing participants within schools was often challenging, owing to a lack of privacy and unpredictable disruptions that affected the interview process. Since the

goal was to understand the history of RJE at their schools, participants had to jog their retrospective memory, which may have distorted the data.

Description of Schools

To begin with, a comparative tabulation of the schools has been created across various descriptive school indicators (See Table 3). The following section will delve into providing a descriptive, contextual overview of each of the four school cases.

Table 3: Descriptive indicators of four school cases

School	SQRP ⁽¹⁾	Demographics	Student Enrollment	Out-of-school suspensions per 100 students (District Avg 8.1)	Student Attainment ⁽²⁾ (District Avg. 18.4)	Freshman on Track % (District Avg 87.4) ⁽³⁾	Culture & Climate ⁽⁴⁾	Neighborhood Crime Statistics ⁽⁴⁾
Year	2016	2016	2015 to 2016	2015 to 2016	2016	2016	2016	2016
Westshore	Level 2+ Provisional Support	Equal mix of AA & Latino	Declined	Below Average	Below Average	At par with Average	Well Organized	Gentrifying Westside 32/77 for violent crime
Timber	Level 2 Intensive Support	Predominantly AA	Declined	Well Above Average	Far Below Average	Below Average	Partially organized	Southside 10/77 for violent crime
Somerset Academy	Level 1 Good Standing	Racially Diverse	Increased	Above Average	Below Average	Above Average	Organized	Northside 57/77 for violent crime
Sunshine	Level 2+ Provisional Support	Racially Diverse	Increased	Slightly Above Average	Below Average	Above Average	Well Organized	Northside 52/77 for violent crime

(1) School Quality Rating Policy is a five-tiered performance system based on a broad range of indicators of success, including, but not limited to, student test score performance, student academic growth, closing of achievement gaps, school culture and climate, attendance, graduation, and preparation for post-graduation success. Levels are 1+, 1, 2+, 2 & 3.

(2) Student Attainment measures how well the school performed on standardized tests at a single point in time, in this case Spring 2016.

(3) Freshman-on-track is a indicator of student's progress towards graduation and college

(4) Culture & Climate based on student and teacher response surveys to My 5Essentials, My Voices Survey comprising of 5 key indicators: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Ambitious Instruction, Supportive Environment and Involved Families

(5) Source: <http://crime.chicagotribune.com/>

Westshore High School

Westshore High School is located in a gentrifying¹⁸ neighborhood on the west side of the City of Chicago. On pulling into the large parking lot of Westshore High School's back entrance, the grimacing brown-bricked building standing tall at a busy neighborhood intersection stood out. Restaurants, grocery stores and a gas station stand diagonally opposite the school's main entrance. The inside of the building evoked a different emotion. The security personnel on entering the building were warm with the greeting. On making the way inside the building, smiling faces, a brightly lit hallway showcasing student accolades and achievements and general sense of a peaceful, calm atmosphere was noticeable.

At one end of the hallway was a standard administrative office, which is where the Principal and Assistant Principal operated out of. At the other end of the hallway stood the student-counseling unit, which had three counselor cubicles, with motivational messages and various college and university flags posted over the walls. Close to the counselor's offices, were the Dean and the social workers workspaces. The Dean's office perpetually brimming with staff and students was located directly opposite the social workers office, which had an adjoining peace room. The school social worker who is Westshore's RJE coordinator and his team of interns, direct the anger-management student groups and oversee peer juries and peace circles. Despite not getting a chance to visit the peace room, it was evident that its

¹⁸ Gentrification is best defined as a class-based process of capital reinvestment through which middle-class individuals and interests stake claims to urban communities after a period of economic disinvestment and alter the physical and social milieus to suit their preferences (Source: Williams, K.N. (2015,). *Toward a Universal Operationalization of Gentrification. Sociation Today, 13 (2), 1*

utility was high based on noticing students walking in, and as stated by several personnel at Westshore. The police room is located somewhere in the middle of the hallway, and is a large open room, with the officer's desk in one corner, a large couch in the middle and a mini refrigerator. The police officer told me he always had chips and cold water for any student who was brought into his office. All major offices related to discipline and climate issues are located on the same floor, unlike other school buildings earlier visited.

According to the 2016 Chicago Tribune crime statistics, the neighborhood ranks thirty-second out of the seventy-seven neighborhoods in Chicago for violent crime. Drawing from the CPS 2016 School Progress Report, the school has an equal proportion of African American and Latino students, however its student enrolment numbers declined from 2015 to 2016. Westshore received a middle level rating of Level 2+ Provisional Support for its The School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP), which is the Board of Education's policy for evaluating school performance. The rating denotes that the school is an average performer that requires additional support from the network team to implement interventions and, that the district may oversee this school's curriculum, student services, staff development, or budget. Student attainment at this school, which means ACT scores in Spring 2016, was below the district average score of 18.4. At the same time, the freshman on track rate¹⁹ has risen from 2015 to 2016 and is mostly at par with the district average of 87.4. Based on results from students and teacher responses to the My Voice, My School 5Essentials survey,

¹⁹ Research from UChicago Consortium shows that freshman year is a make-it-or-break-it year for high school students. Course performance in the freshman year of high school is the most predictive indicator of whether a student will drop out of high school—more predictive than race, ethnicity, poverty level, and prior test scores combined (Source: To & Through Issue Brief)

Westshore is “Well-Organized for Improvement” which means that the school has a very strong culture and climate, suggesting the school is set up for success. Leaders and staff have assessed their school climate, and they are beginning to adopt best practices to support SEL for all students. The number of out-of-school suspensions per 100 students has declined and is below the district average of 8.1.

A total of 15 school personnel at Westshore High School across the various staff types participated in the study as highlighted in the methodology section. Of the 15 interviewees, three people were in the administration, three were members of the teaching staff, four were members of the non-teaching staff and five were support staff. Most of the staff at Westshore High School are veteran staff that have been around at the school for at least 3 years. It also emerged that the principal was a principal intern for one year, under the previous administration and thus her transition into the principal position was smooth. The previous leader at Westshore was popular and that appeared to be the case with the current leader as well. A majority of the staff interviewed was female and the diverse staff appears to cater to the needs of primarily Black and Latino students at Westshore. At Westshore, the school social worker also known as the RJE coordinator worked in close collaboration with the Dean. Both care and culture and climate teams were setup at Westshore.

Besides the interviews, I had the chance to observe a culture and climate team meeting that comprised of many participants that were earlier interviewed. The meeting’s objective was to assess and evaluate student survey responses to their perception of the school’s culture and climate. As per my observation of the meeting, the meeting that was facilitated by the principal was conducted in a systematic manner with an emphasis on eliciting staff responses. At the start of the meeting, the principal drew the format of the instructions to be followed by the staff on the chalkboard, which roughly looked like this:

Facts	Interpretation/ Wondering's	Implications	Action/ Follow-up
What do you see in the data?	Strengths/ Challenges the data shows	Root cause	Next-steps

There appeared to be positive camaraderie amongst the staff members. There was also a large selection of food laid out on the center table that everyone helped themselves, I included. The meeting was formal, yet had an informal vibe to it.

Staff alluded to the fact that the student population is largely comprised of kids hailing from the broader neighborhood, as Westshore is known as a “generational high school”. More recently, the larger neighborhood in which Westshore is located has begun to witness a growth of charter schools that has in part contributed to the decline in the enrolment numbers at the high school. As a consequence, the school has begun admitting students outside of the boundary requirements. As a newspaper report reads, “Westshore is fighting for its life”, as the school struggles with resources because of under-enrolment and under-utilization of the building (Bogira, 2014, May 6). According to the Assistant Principal, Westshore has now become a repository of students who could not qualify for charter or selective enrolment schools, which in part may explain the below average student attainment at Westshore. She says:

The majority of the students at Westshore have, like... I would say the reason the reason they ended up here is usually that Westshore is able to meet their needs. So, whether they are transferred from a charter, or they didn't get accepted to selective enrolment schools, but they were looking for, like a different high school experience. Although it's a neighboring high school, it's not like that stereotypical. It's very personalized. It has been since I've been here. But it has not always been. We have 12 charter schools in our attendance area. So, our attendance area kids mostly go to the charter schools. Unless they get kicked out. Then they come here.

The peace and calm that renders the air within the school building was apparently not the way Westshore High School was in the past. The school has worked hard at altering its past ill reputation, which was rampant with gang-warfare, and has drastically reformed its culture and climate. According to the chief engineer, a former student at Westshore and who has been associated with the school for over 25 years in multiple staff capacities talked about the rampant gang warfare that existed at Westshore in the light of school closures and the growth of charter schools around Westshore. He states:

Cuz people, you know, it's very hard to change a perception of a place right? An institution like this. Cuz people, there's so much history. But slowly, that started to change. And quietly. And so we started to get more kids and more kids. And our enrollment here you know, was 1800 kids at one point. And we were like a lot...So then, CPS at that point then there was transitions. And they would---that was when they began to do turnaround schools and those kinds of things. And, then a school got closed down, another high school. And CPS then decided they were gonna send I think it was like a third of the population here. Now this is a school that's way in the west side. Total opposing gangs... Their street battle now was in this building. Right? Because now, basically we gave em a platform. You know?

Timber High School

Timber High School is located in the south side of Chicago. According to the Chicago Tribune violent crime statistics, the neighborhood ranks tenth out of seventy-seven neighborhoods in the city, the most criminogenic neighborhood across all school contexts. Close to the school stands an old church and a brand new hospital. Further down the road is an elementary school and another high school, both charter schools. While speaking to one of the study participants at Timber, she exclaimed, "There is a Whole Foods down the road!" There were signs of the neighborhood gentrifying.

Timber high school shares its campus with a charter school. At first glimpse, the campus reminded me of a prison lock down facility, with its barren façade and an industrial, worn out building structure. Timber High School's interiors matched its exteriors. It was cold, intimidating and noisy. The atmosphere at the school felt beaten. A desk stood right in the middle of a barren lobby and security officers had their workstation with large screens in front of the main entrance. Students' hanging around at the lobby is a common phenomenon. One could access the lunchroom, the Dean's room and the administrative office from the lobby. The principal's room is where the administrative office is. The Assistant Principal's office is located on the first floor in front of the student's lockers. The police room is located on the second floor, and the peace room is on the third floor. One quotation hanging on the principal's office wall read, "Attitude is everything" and "Think outside the box". Also present were three passes hanging from a key holder, the hall passes, the office pass and the bathroom pass. Her space felt very welcoming. So did the peace room. In contrast, the other offices were dingy, small and uninviting.

Drawing from the CPS 2016 School Progress Report, the school's student enrolment numbers have declined significantly from 2015 to 2016. Timber has a predominantly African American student population hailing mostly from the larger neighborhood. The school received a below average SQRP rating of Level 2 Provisional Support, indicative of the school needing high level support and in extreme cases, the Board can take actions such as turnaround or principal removal. Student attainment and the freshman on track rates were far below the respective district averages. Based on results from the My Voice, My School 5Essentials survey, Timber is "Partially Organized" which means that the school's culture and climate has a few strengths, but also has several weaknesses.

A total of 16 school personnel partook of the study at Timber High School- three from the administrative rung, five teachers, two non-teaching staff and six support staff. The staff had an equal mix of male and female staff. The principal and assistant principal have been recently appointed at the school. The Dean who had recently resigned from his post also participated in the study. There is a mix of old and new staff personnel at Timber, with the longest staying members being the English Teacher, one of the founding members of the school as well as the Special Educational instructor. It is interesting to note that the study ended up capturing only white teachers despite them being a minority at Timber. The black staff was very skeptical of the confidentiality of the interview, hence declined to participate. Overall, compared to other schools, Timber was the most challenging site for data collection due to personnel's reluctance to participate, which was indicative of mistrust between the administration and staff.

The RJE coordinator was appointed as a part of the Harmony Consortium's grant two years ago. The school social worker had also been hired as a part of another grant and operates out of a room in the library. The peace room in contrast to the building's staidness was warm and appealing. It was a brightly lit, open space with a shelf filled with board games and books in one corner, a large couch on the other corner, positive quotations pasted on the wall and chairs arranged in the center of the room in a circular fashion, denoting a peace circle. Timber has not setup its culture and climate and care teams.

Additionally, I had the opportunity to observe a staff meeting that comprised of around twenty teachers. The meeting room was a large space that had purple colored walls and a disco ball oddly hanging from the ceiling, with the words "Lets Boogie" splashed across the back wall. The room possibly doubled up as an official meeting space and a more informal space. Since the newly appointed principal was brought on board, and learnt that

staff meetings were held with relative frequency, to engage staff with team building exercises and keep them abreast of the school's progress. At this particular meeting, the exercise facilitated by the principal was called "The Profile of a Student Activity", wherein teachers had to read twelve case profiles of students, choose one profile that they identified with, locate other teachers who identified with the same profile and discuss "What was it like to be this kind of student?" From their body language it was observable that most teachers felt disengaged and uninterested in the exercise.

Timber High School was a part of the 2010 Renaissance-Small Schools Movement²⁰ in Chicago. This reform plan was meant to replace failing schools and build 100 new small public schools catering to minority and low-income neighborhoods (Ayers & Klonsky, February 2006). However its claims for being a successful model have been shaky (Woestehoff & Neill, January 2007). When Timber began operating as a small school in 2010, there was a cohesive, familial culture at the school as stated by some of the veteran staff. However with the departure of some of its key-founding members, multiple changes in leadership, massive staff turnover, and rampant corruption, the environment at the school began plummeting. "Chaos" was the predominant word that personnel used to describe the present culture and climate at Timber. The English Teacher at Timber, who is one of the

²⁰ Smaller numbers of students, a more intimate and personalized learning environment, and a cohesive vision among teachers characterize small schools. The small size serves as a platform on which other important elements of successful schools can best flourish. For example, the manageable size of a small school allows the faculty to meet frequently to discuss the day-to-day operations of the school, as well as to design curriculum, discuss student progress and meet with parents and community members. Teachers with a shared pedagogical or thematic vision choose to work together to design the school's educational program (Source: http://cps.edu/Schools/High_schools/Pages/Small.aspx)

founding teachers of the school, has described the steep decline of the culture at the school, while emphasizing the demoralized and dejected atmosphere currently at play at Timber:

Not last year, we had, over half the staff left at the end of the year before. And then, so last year we had a lot of new staff. And so that, you know, was definitely impacting the culture. And this year, you know, almost the whole staff returned, so it's starting to feel more settled, I guess. But there's definitely been this feeling of, it's a little bit chaotic. It's a little bit, unsteady, you know. An example is when Ms. <name of current principal> came for the first time to address the students, one of the seniors said... like immediately upon meeting her said: 'What do we have to do to make you stay?' Because people keep leaving us. You know, and I just like ripped my guts out. So, there's sort of that sense. There's a sense of sort of instability with, you know, everything that's happening with the CTU. There's this feeling, we have no money, and we have no personnel stability.

The above quotation is indicative of the kind of secondary, institutional trauma that exists within Timber- wherein there appears to be a sense of learned helplessness amongst the employees. Timber has a highly transient student population and as Payne (2008, p.14) cites, "Schools are just better off when students are not constantly shipping in and out". The spurt of charter schools in the neighborhood has led to Timber receiving students who are "charter-school rejects". The Mathematics teacher who is also a CTU delegate said that Timber used to be an "oasis" in a troubled neighborhood, but believes that has changed. However the special educational instructor still believes that students find their school safer compared to their deprived home conditions. She states:

These kids come in with a lot of trauma, abuse, parental loss, incarceration, we get kids from DCFS (Department of Child and Family Services)- they have deficits. The idea is provide socio-emotional skills that are learning and academic focused. Focus is to help them be well rounded, they have so many obstacles, their behavior patterns are conducive for survival; it doesn't allow them to learn...Kids come from extreme

poverty; their parents barely make ends meet. Their focus is survival and not academics. They want them to get educated and be in a safe environment.

The above quotation is also indicative of the poverty levels amongst primarily black students who attend Timber, wherein the school is almost an escape or relief from their unsafe home environments. Even though Timber is meant to be a small school operating at no more than 600 students, the current enrolment is very low. Despite the small numbers, staff report that students lack academic motivation and the school has below average test scores. This is throwing up new concerns surrounding the status of the school. As stated in a recent Chicago-Sun Times article (FitzPatrick & Spielman, December 2016):

Several South Side high schools are expected to be on the chopping block in the next few years to make way for a shiny new neighborhood high school in <name of the neighborhood in which Timber is located>, the Chicago Sun-Times has learned... CPS officials also aren't publicly explaining why the district, with falling enrollment and budget woes, needs a new high school. But one source told the Sun-Times it's likely that four to six schools could be closed and consolidated into the new school. No schools have been targeted, but the existing CPS high schools in and around <name of the neighborhood in which Timber is located> are among the city's most under-enrolled.

Sunshine High School

Sunshine High School is one of the most diverse schools in Chicago with students from 35 countries who speak more than 20 languages. Many of Sunshine's scholars survived refugee camps, generations of institutionalized racism and poverty (Swanson, 2015, May 21). While walking down the school's hallways, colorful display of flags from various countries indicative of the multiple ethnicities of the students attending Sunshine stride the place. The school's multiplicity has a common unifying force in the form of a symbolic acronym that invokes a sense of identity and belongingness to the school, as proudly

showcased on the school uniforms worn by students and staff alike.

The school located in the north side of the city of Chicago, stands within a primarily residential neighborhood, with an elementary school in close proximity. According to the 2016 Chicago Tribune crime statistics, the neighborhood ranks fifty-second out the seventy-seven neighborhoods in Chicago for violent crime. In 2015, the school witnessed a turnaround after being on academic probation for thirteen years owing to poor enrolment, attendance and academic indicators (Rice, 2015, October 28). The school has jumped from a Level 2 intensive support SQRP rating when the school was in need of a high level of support, to a present rating of Level 2+ provisional support wherein the school is an average performer seeking additional support from the network team to implement interventions. The current principal took over the principal reins when the school was in a lot of turmoil and uproar, back in 2015.

Drawing from the CPS 2016 School Progress Report, the school's enrolment numbers have risen from 2015 to 2016 but the student attainment is below the district average. The freshman on track rate has improved and presently matches the district average. Based on results from student and teacher responses to the My Voice, My School 5Essentials survey, Sunshine is "Well-Organized for Improvement" which means that the school has a very strong culture and climate, suggesting the school is set up for success. Leaders and staff have assessed their school climate, and they are beginning to adopt best practices to support SEL for all students. The number of out-of-school suspensions per 100 students has declined from 2015 to 2016, but is still marginally higher than the district average.

A total of 14 school personnel took part in the study at Sunshine High School- three from the administration, three teachers, three non-teaching staff and five support staff. A majority of the staff has been affiliated with Sunshine for a substantial period of time. There

is an equal mix of gender across the staff categories and the staff was as diverse as the study body. A majority of the staff spoke about their school's diversity as a source of strength. They acknowledge the hardships some of their students have undergone. While I was interviewing at Sunshine, the Director of Culture and Climate at the school had been recently appointed as the Assistant Principal of the school, and he held both titles. The school had a culture and climate team and a care team in place.

The Assistant principal presided over the culture and climate team meeting observed at Sunshine's peace room that was attended by teachers, the RJE coordinator and an external SEL consultant. The meeting focused on improving communication surrounding norms and expectations for Sunshine students. The peace room is the first room that one encounters on walking up the stairwell to the third floor. It is clearly demarcated as it stands out in a row of classrooms on the same floor. Inside there is a cluster of chairs arranged in a circular manner with a carpet in the middle. The "Circle Norms" have been pasted on the chart across a wall and quotations such as "I believe in myself" and "Be the Change You Want to See" adorn the other walls. It appeared to be a safe environment exuding positivity. The RJE coordinator from the Dynamic Center came to Sunshine in 2013 and has been praised in the media for making the peace room very accessible and inviting for students and staff alike (Rice 2015, October 6).

On entering Sunshine, there was a small room on the side, which was designated the Deans office. The room looked rather intimidating with a bulky desk in the middle and chairs, two working desks with computers on the side and a microwave and refrigerator. The administrative office with the principal's former office lies adjacent to the Dean's office. The assistant principal's office (which is also where majority of the interviews took place) is located down the hall from the administrative office next to a few special educational

classrooms. The current principal's office is located on the third floor amidst classrooms and staff rooms. It is large office, with Sunshine's logo plastered all over the walls; the office extends out into an alcove with comfortable seating and a refrigerator on the side. There were several "Calm Classrooms in session" stickers across the school's classroom doors. Sunshine follows the CPS calm classroom model²¹ which according to the Principal:

Yeah. Calm space is just a place where you can go and do some meditation. We have what we call Calm classroom here, and these are mindfulness activities that you can do on your own or with another person. Teachers do it twice a day. They do it at the beginning of the third period and at the beginning of the seventh period. And it's different techniques. It's basically Yoga and breathing techniques. Mindfulness. We do it before every staff meeting to help us reset ourselves and focus.

This quotation is indicative of the emphasis being laid on maintaining peace and calm at Sunshine and honing teacher's skills to be better able to serve students. Given the past leadership changes and former probationary status at Sunshine, the veteran staff are still warming up to their dynamic principal. Prior to the present principal coming on, with numerous changes in leadership and staff attrition, personnel at Sunshine began filling in the leadership gaps, which resulted in lowering the staff camaraderie and causing greater rifts between the administration and staff. As the principal states:

You know, I've only been here for three years and I'm still building trust. And before I was here, there were four principals in four years. So, that high principal turnover really caused a lot of adult trust in the building. Cause when you don't really have a true principal or a true leader, then there's a lot of different people that think they're in

²¹ In preschool through high school environments, Calm Classroom creates a school-wide culture that cultivates the habit of practicing techniques that increase emotional self-regulation, attention span and absorption of academic content (Source: <http://www.calmclassroom.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Calm-Classroom-Overview-General.pdf>)

charge. You know, so there become these pockets of different people that are in charge of certain things, and they sort of have the gate on power of those things, and which causes a lot of distrust, and anxiety, and resentment.

Somerset Academy

Somerset Academy is the only Wall-to-Wall International Baccalaureate (IB) amongst my chosen school sites. It upholds the most rigorous academic standards with a strong emphasis on responsible citizenship. The school also has a Magnet Fine and Performing Arts Program. The school with its impressive classical revival style building composed of cream-colored brick is located on the north side of the city of Chicago. The building was large, and learned that at one point in time Somerset housed nearly 2500 students.

On entering the building, the first noticeable site is the police room. Walking on, I encountered a security officer greeted me and asked if I was from the board. On explaining the purpose of my visit, I was escorted through the metal detectors towards the main office. As I made my way to the main office through the wide quiet hallways, I noticed the Dean's office located diagonally opposite the security personnel's desk, also in close proximity to the police room. There was a health center a few doors away from the Dean's office. The hallways were adorned with the school building's mascot posters as well as showcased artwork by students. The principal, the counselors and the assistant principal's have their offices within the main central office location. The school was so large that there were three assistant principal positions. The principal's office was an open space with comfortable seating, surrounded by bookshelves and a large clock on the wall. On inquiring further, I found out that the peace room manned by the RJE coordinator from the Cherry Center was

on the third floor at a nondescript location. The peace room itself was rather plain and dreary.

According to the 2016 Chicago Tribune crime statistics, the neighborhood ranks fifty-seventh out the seventy-seven neighborhoods in Chicago for violent crime. As per the district data, back in 2010 under the previous administration, Somerset's rating rose from a bottom tier rating to a Level 1 SQRP rating in 2013 after the school had been on academic probation for many years (Woodard, 2013, October 17). Somerset maintains its Level 1 SQRP good standing, which signifies that the school is a high performer and has met or exceeded the district's minimum performance standards. Owing to dubious circumstance, the former principal who had brought about Somerset's transformation was removed from her post and the current new principal has been recently appointed. The student population like Sunshine high school is also very diverse at Somerset. Drawing from the CPS 2016 School Progress Report, the school's enrolment numbers have risen and the student attainment matched the district average. The freshman on track rate has seen a slight dip from 2015 to 2016, but is still well above the district average. Based on results from students and teacher responses to the My Voice, My School 5Essentials survey, Sunshine is "Organized" which means that the school has a strong culture and climate with only a few areas for improvement. Leaders and staff have assessed their school climate, and they are beginning to adopt best practices to support SEL for all students. The number of out-of-school suspensions per 100 students has risen from 2015 to 2016 and is substantially higher than the district average.

I interviewed a total of 18 personnel at Somerset- three from the administration, three teachers, five non-teaching staff and seven support staff. There is an equal representation of gender amongst the staff. The principal has only been recently appointed at Somerset. The

current RJE coordinator, from the Cherry Center has recently replaced another RJE coordinator who had been operating at Somerset. The remaining staff has been at Somerset for longer. The school is in a transitional phase, given the peculiar circumstances under which the new interim principal was appointed.

Somerset is the only school amongst the four that has an active student council who recently voted to remove the uniform dress code policy at their school. The school has strong links with a prestigious academic university in the city for staff training and professional development as well as courses for Somerset seniors. The larger neighborhood in which Somerset is located in, has a strong affiliation with the school and is actively involved in the upkeep of Somerset. Besides the interviews, I had an opportunity to observe a behavioral health or care team meeting co-facilitated by one of the counselors and the school social worker, being held at a conference room adjacent to the principal's office. The other members in attendance included the RJE coordinator, counselors, case managers, one of the assistant principals and a few teachers. At the meeting, all the participants received an agenda with an emphasis on checking in with their team members to discuss specific confidential at-risk student cases and also discuss proposed changes to the schedule, timing and group norms of the care team meeting. The meeting appeared to be well organized, however I could tell that there were some tense moments between some staff members. While some seemed very eager to participate in the meeting discussions, there were others who remained glued to their computers and complained about the meeting taking away their work time. The social worker seemed particularly exasperated.

A majority of staff interviewed at Somerset Academy was white. The student body is racially and ethnically diverse. A white male counselor who has been at Somerset for sixteen years brought these racial dynamics to my attention:

I would say that there are African-American students. In terms of culture or in terms of expressiveness. In terms of behavior [*stutter*] it-it certainly--I mean there is a largely Caucasian staff. So I think that-that, if-if students are raising their voices. or y-you know, the two cultures, I don't-I don't think necessarily come together in that way.

Inherent in the counselors statement above was the fact that there was a mismatch between the racial makeup of school staff vis a vis minority students thereby highlighting staff biases. There were class dynamics also at play at Somerset. The student demographics comprised of students from the larger neighborhood (approximately 50 to 60 percent) and students who tested into the arts (approximately 20 percent) and the IB programs (approximately 20 percent) from across the city. Different academic norms and standards apply to students based on their demographic. The level of parental involvement also varied based on the subgroup. As stated by the social worker, the students have themselves begun self-segregating wherein students belonging to the IB or Arts program feel superior to the regular community kids- which potentially biases staff responses towards these heterogeneous group of students. The social worker states:

You know and then there's a lot of segregation here. Like a lot of students talk like well they're IB kids. Those are the arts kids like we don't talk. They're all segregated. Right. So they put it on like the community kids that are all bad. And the IB kids are all snooty. And there's no, how did that to. Like they've segregated themselves. Because we have so many different types of we do. It's a lot different.

These distinctive student groups have caused inherent bias amongst the staff. These student class dynamics have been most evident at Somerset compared to the other school sites that have more homogenous student bodies. According to the principal who has observed this phenomena in her short time states:

I think it depends what student you're talking about. I think our student culture although for the most part all students are, valued by me, and, I feel like all students feel like they can approach me. I think because of our different programs that students are stratified a bit. And so, I think staff interacts with students differently depending on what program they're in, depending how they know them.

I think there are certain expectations teachers bring to the table when it comes to behavior based on either what program they're in, or how they look, or something. And I think there's a time when that plays out in their interactions.

Common features across varying school contexts

Besides the stated differences in the school environment and contextual factors at the four schools, there were a few common aspects that ran across the different schools. Across the board with regards to the measure of whether students feel safe in and around the school building and traveling to and from school, all schools received weak ratings in 2016. This safety measure is interesting, as one would have expected schools that are located in the North side compared to schools in the South and Westside to be safer. However this measure connects to the literature on the growth of charter schools and privatization of education, which compels students to travel beyond their neighborhoods to attend school (de la Torre et al., January 2015).

Personnel across schools spoke of the low level of parental involvement at their schools. This is largely attributable to the fact that parents or in most cases the guardians of high-school students reside in poor neighborhoods, have multiple jobs and can barely make ends meet. Students come from a variety of home backgrounds; many are from low-income and single-parent homes, several students are homeless, and some live apart from their parents. Owing to the circumstances that students grow up in, school personnel recognize the high unmet need and trauma that their students bring into the school. For instance, the health clinic advocate at Sunshine states:

Working in the clinic and getting to see a little deeper, actually working closely with my social worker, there's a lot of trauma. A lot of students that have had pretty significant traumas, either in, at the capacity of moving to this country because of a trauma like refugee situation or neighborhood trauma because of gang issues.. I mean, there is probably a handful of kids who come in and have a risk assessment that's boring. Usually there's something that pops up even if it is a family history illness that has changed the student one way or another. So, as I said, on the surface it's a happy, jovial place, but underneath and not too far from there I think there's some pretty serious stuff.

The above quotation is very telling of how most students attending CPS schools hail from low-income backgrounds and in many instances have undergone past tragedy and trauma, which they bring into their schools. Some parents perceive the child's school as intimidating because English is not their first language. Thus in order to enhance engagement for such parents, Bilingual Parental Committees is being setup. In addition, multiple personnel alluded to the fact that parents have begun to develop a negative association with their child's school because schools tends to contact them only when their child is in trouble. For instance, the special educational instructor at Timber high school believes that is it imperative for school staff to be aware of student parent's reluctance to engage with their schools and hence she mentions that she makes special efforts towards involving parents with their child's school life, beyond handling matters of discipline. In her opinion:

Kids come from extreme poverty; their parents barely make ends meet. Their focus is survival and not academics. They want them to get educated and be in a safe environment. You have to make parents feel comfortable coming in and not intimidated. 72 students are diverse learners. I want to have the parent as my ally. In order to establish that, you need to establish a connection- I go to their homes, even though that is not the protocol and get to know their cousins, sisters, relatives in the child's life. I need to have support on both sides, I do. I don't think we do that here. Staff calls parents when they are frustrated and this only creates a further barrier. For my diverse learners, I

get the parents in and tell them let's talk about you, I already know my kids- so how do you deal with stress?

Unanimously, several staff across the schools complained about the perils of social media and cell phone usage at their schools. Personnel cited many common disciplinary infractions from theft, to smoking marijuana, talking back to teachers, cursing, to fights breaking out. However several believed that social media is the biggest cause for “disrespect” and dissonance at schools. Schools appear to be struggling to handle matters of social media especially when such activities happen outside of the school’s jurisdiction. This was resonated by the Dean at Westshore:

Social media. Yea, I mean, we have, you know, a lot and I explained to the parents and, you know, visitors that come in, that most of the issues I deal with do not start here in school. Most starts on the weekend or after school and I would say majority somewhere within the incident there is a social media aspect attached to it.

Gang violence, once a very common phenomenon at these high schools has reduced drastically. There are multiple reasons attributable to this reduction such as counseling gang-related students out to alternative schools, larger neighborhood gentrification forces bringing in a different students into school buildings, and enforcing uniforms so as to de-identify gangs within the building, amongst others. Gang-activity still persists in some shape or form, but staff is alerted and have become vigilant to gangbanging at their school and hence the impacts of gang violence have lowered at schools. For instance, the principal at Timber high school said:

Yesterday we had a big fight. It was gang related. So you had kids who identify as black disciples versus one student who identifies, or says he doesn't identify with gangster disciples. So, you know, that conflict blew up, turned into a fight, and there were three kids basically beating up one on his own. But in the end, when we pulled them all apart,

the boys all apologized to me, which was an awesome experience on one side. You know, but they basically were like, we know we could have done this differently. And they were like, this was my first fight this year, and I haven't done, you know. And I was like, it's really good that it was your first fight, but it's really bad that it happened. Also, how can we work through that. But I think that's what all of us are struggling with across the district probably, but particularly at schools where kids are in constant crisis.

The typical disciplinary protocol that is uniformly followed across schools in the event of a more serious infraction, such as a physical fight breaking out between two students in the classroom involves 1) calling security personnel through an assigned buzzer located in the classroom, since teachers by law are not allowed to break up fights on their own²², 2) security or police personnel reach the site of infraction, call for back-up on their walkie-talkies and break up the fight, 3) an entry is made into the student logger system, Verify, 4) the students are separated and are taken to two different locations, typically the Dean/ principal's office and the peace room, 5) students are given an opportunity to cool down, de-escalate and talk about what happened, i.e., information is sought from both parties²³, 6) a more thorough investigation led by the Dean is undertaken about the cause of the fight by assessing the level of corroboration based on individual stories, as well as viewing the security cameras operated by the security personnel, 7) a disciplinary plan of action is made based on the severity, level of harm caused, past disciplinary background of students , and 8) parents are informed and they have to come and pick up their child.

²² If for instance, the infraction entailed a student talking back to their teacher, then the first step in the protocol would be for the teacher to engage in a restorative chat/conversation with their student to help de-escalate the situation. However if the teacher is unsuccessful in doing so and the student goes out of hand, then the teacher resorts to following the remaining steps in the protocol

²³ In this step, it was unclear to me whether RJE practices such as restorative conversations were being used to de-escalate conflict or whether de-escalation has always existed prior to RJE being adopted at the school

CHAPTER 6

ADOPTION OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: POLICY & PARTNERSHIP CONTEXTS

Adoption refers to the decision to take on any new reform or change, i.e., in the case of the current study, RJE. It is the first step in the process of implementation and subsequent institutionalization of RJE within CPS. As stated in Chapter 3, which provides a historical overview of the growth of RJE within CPS, we can observe that CBOs are the harbingers of change and reform efforts. Drawing on the institutional entrepreneurship perspective as well as Matland's (1995) policy implementation framework this chapter highlights the important role played by CBOs in bringing RJE practices to the forefront, at both the central district level as well as at local school levels.

This chapter has the following four sections. The first section emphasizes how CBOs forayed into RJE as they strived to mirror community concerns regarding the zero-tolerance punitive policies that were dominant within CPS. This section emphasizes how CBOs simultaneously placed pressure on the CPS to alter the SCC whilst building best practices at the local school level. The second section explores the role played by CBOs post changes in the SCC and their relationship to the district's RP coaching model. Section three lays emphasis on the RJE adoption process amongst the shortlisted schools. Finally, drawing of the key theoretical frameworks, the last section highlights the discussion and conclusion with regards to specific roles played by the various actors' pre and post policy reform and traces the timeline of individual schools against the broader timeline of changes at the policy level.

Community Based Organizations Foray into Restorative Justice

As stated by the project coordinator of the Freedom Center, a youth organizing collaborative fighting for education and racial justice, the landscape of CBOs engaged in

RJE programming take on either, 1) a RJE service provider approach, which entails working in close consultation with school personnel, instating an RJE coordinator and building school systems and structures, or 2) a community organizing advocacy approach, which entails working in conjunction with other CBOs to raise awareness surrounding RJE and improving CPS district policy or 3) some do both.

Community-led RJE reform

Resonant with what was stated in Chapter 3, CBOs alongside aggrieved parents of CPS students who were disproportionately affected by the dominant zero-tolerance policies began to embrace RJE as a part of their agency missions to bring about reform within CPS. For instance, the Blossom Center's motto is "Parents bring a sense of urgency", as their agency's mission is to empower the voices of low-income and working families at all levels of civic life. Following the tragic death of a student who was shot and killed at Westshore high school, at a time when gang warfare had careened out of control, a parent with the assistance of the Blossom Center pushed for instating parent-run peace centers at schools. Parents from all walks of life campaigned for restorative justice practices in elementary and high schools in Chicago and then worked to demonstrate how suspensions can be avoided by utilizing parent-led Peace centers (or peace rooms) in schools. They also devised a parent-to-parent organizing manual, which includes implementation strategies for winning over parents to RJE (Source: Agency Brochure).

CBOs across Chicago began expanding RJE as a part of their mission. Such efforts catapulted into subsequent CBO coalition-building campaigns in 2007- the Elementary Justice Campaign and the HIGH HOPES Campaign in 2010 to make RJE standardized practice within schools. In 2011, VOYCE also came out with a scathing report on

disproportionate district expenditure towards safety and security within schools. Such campaigns and reports placed pressures on the central district to embrace RJE and push for alterations to the SCC. For instance, the Program Manager of Imagine Center, a pioneering national RJE training, technical assistance and advocacy agency emphasized the roots of RJE in community coalition building, as she states:

So, anyway, so there was a collaboration from some wonderful organizations and groups of folks and, so some systems -- really great systems people and so one thing was one judge was really interested in this, and so we formed what we called at the School RJ Committee, and decided that, you know, that CPS needed to include restorative justice practices by the school code, so that started in like 2006 or something, or something like that, and then...It took a couple of years, and so the practices were included but the zero tolerance policies didn't end right, it was just paper but it was good to have paper! Just that how do make that stick and how do you make it meaningful. And so that sort of got us to start focusing on, you know, what could we do with the schools and then, you know, as more -- as we realized and we learn from, you know, the parents and these community folks and young people just how pervasive zero tolerance is!

This quotation reflects on the unrelenting efforts being undertaken through coalition building among CBOs, which successfully placed pressure on the district to alter their discipline policies. More importantly, CBO efforts were rooted in the communities that were most affected by the district's zero tolerance policies.

In addition, CBOs created campaign reports such as the VOYCE report, HIGH Hopes Campaign Report, The Parent to Parent Guide for RJE, a toolkit for CPS amongst other documents indicative of their research endeavors. They provided a list of recommendations for the district to follow with regards to replacing zero-tolerance with RJE, which were successfully incorporated. Here is a sample of recommendations from the 2007 Elementary Justice Campaign Report:

Recommendations

- End out-of-school suspensions, except in the case of serious threats to student safety
- Reinstate recess and breaks, including more physical education in school day.
- Implement violence prevention programs and programs based on the philosophy of restorative justice
- Provide training on discipline policies to parents, school staff, and administrators and provide information on school discipline policies in a more parent- friendly format.
- Provide school discipline data school-by-school and involve parents in oversight and accountability in creating and reviewing discipline policies.

CBOs continue to keep community concerns at the center of their RJE efforts. For instance, the Harmony Consortium comprising of the Freedom Center, a youth organizing collaborative for education and racial justice, the Vision Center, the professional development arm for the CTU and the Cherry Center, a youth and family agency that pioneered the first peer jury program within CPS- have formed a unique collaborative that aims to build teacher and student leadership in Chicago schools to transform the impact of discipline on young males of color. Through teacher practice and collaborative teacher leadership, the Consortium teaches effective disciplinary practices to school staff, including security and discipline officers. According to the program manager of the Freedom Center:

Yeah. I think the way we're able to build a case for the need for restorative justice is through data and research on, a data set from the Department of Education, the Civil Rights Division, that points to high racial disparities in terms of the ways that discipline is being applied. Data from the Illinois State Board of Education and data from CPS. And I think what we see throughout is a pattern of, you know, the way that discipline is being applied looks very different in CPS where there's high amounts of students of color versus, you know, where there might be versus schools where there might be more affluent white students or schools in the suburbs. And so for us, you know, when we look at the numbers, when we look at data, what we're seeing is a high amount of

suspensions and expulsions for minor incidents that we know, restorative justice if done correctly could, you know, number one, not only deal with but maybe even prevent.

The above quotation not only highlights the research endeavors being undertaken by CBOs to influence and shape policy, but also emphasizes the glaring, racial disparities that exist within CPS with regards to school discipline. CBOs hope and believe that sincere RJE efforts backed by the district can serve to allay such racial disparities with an eye towards being a true alternative to punitive discipline.

Best Practices at the Local School Level

As CBOs were striving to place pressures on the district to alter their discipline policies whilst mirroring community concerns, they were simultaneously striving to change the rhetoric at the local school level. By building best practices at the local school level, direct service CBOs were beginning to expand their original mission to reflect RJE as the way forward to handle matters of punitive discipline within schools. Towards this end, CBOs began enhancing their skill set and reputation in the field of RJE and worked towards assisting schools adopt and implement RJE. I have displayed in Table 4 the nature and intensity of 9 agencies and their partnerships with specific schools regarding RJE implementation.

Table 4: Nature and Intensity of CBO-School RJ partnerships

Agency Name	Area of Work	# of Partner High Schools	Year of Partnership	Frequency of contact with school (Days/Hours per week)	RJ Strategy & Nature of RJ activities/practices			Peace Room Setup		Onsite Peace/RJ coordinator		Total# of trainings conducted	Typical duration of trainings	Funding for RJ (Source; Duration)	LOIR
					Universal	Targeted	Intensive	Yes	No	Yes	No				
Independent Agencies															
Pinacle Center	Grassroots Community Advocacy	1 (Currently discontinued)	2008	Almost everyday before	x				x		x	Twice a yr	Half-day; 4-5 hrs at the school	Pvt funding; General Operating Funds	Independent
Blossom Center	Family Focused Organizing, leadership development and community building	West Shore High School (currently discontinued)	2010	4 days, 16 hours	x	x	x	x		x (Parent Peace Keepers)	12+	4 hr avg	Cook County IAC, CPS (JABG) via CPS Socio-Emotional Office	Cooperating	
Grand Center	Transformational learning, social justice programming, and action	None													
Imagine Center	Restorative justice training, technical assistance, and advocacy	None													
Oracle Center	Grassroots Community Advocacy	None													
Cherry Center (Operates Independent of Harmony Consortium too)	Youth and family service agency	Somerset Academy	1998	3 days a week	x	x	x	x		x	Been challenging		State funded	Cooperating	
		2	2013	4 days a week	x					x	Quite a few	5 hr-2 days	Pvt funding	Unifying	
		3	2011 (with peer confs) and then again in 2012	1.5 days a week		x						Quite a few	.5-3 hrs	Pvt funding	Partnering
		4	2014	4 days a week	x						x	Quite a few	.5 hr-2 days	Pvt funding	Partnering
		5	2013	4 days a week	x						x	Quite a few	.5-3 hrs	Pvt funding	Partnering
		6	2013	4 days a week	x						x	Quite a few	.5 hr-2 days	Pvt funding	Partnering
Dynamic Center	Youth development for college success	1	2013	20 hrs / 4 days	x	x	x	x		x	10 to 12	2 to 3 hrs	School/Agency Grants	Partnering	
		2	2014	20 hrs / 4 days	x	x	x	x		x	2 to 3	2 to 3 hrs	School/Agency Grants	Network	
		Sunshine High School	2013	20 hrs / 4 days	x	x	x	x		x	12 to 15	2 to 3 hrs	School/Agency Grants	Cooperating	
		4	2014	20 hrs / 4 days	x	x	x	x		x	15 to 20	2 to 3 hrs	School/Agency Grants	Partnering	
Harmony Consortium															
Freedom Center	Youth organizing collaborative for education and racial justice	Timber High School	2013	Everyday	x	x	x	x		x	High	2 hours	Pvt funding	Partnering	
Vision Center	Professional Development Arm for CPS Teachers	2	2013	Everyday	x					x	Medium	2 hours	Pvt funding	Partnering	
Cherry Center	Youth and family service agency	3	2013	3 times a week atleast	x	x	x	x			High	2 hours	Pvt funding	Partnering	
		4	2013	Atleast 1 time a week	x						Medium	2 hours	Pvt funding	Cooperating	

As observable from Table 4, the average duration of most partnerships in the past and the present has been 3 years. CBOs have maintained a reasonably high level of contact with schools, an average of three times a week. Most agencies strive to operate at the universal (proactive/preventive) hierarchy of RJE responses within schools but mostly end up providing intensive and targeted RJE responses (more reactive) given the perpetual state of urban flux within such schools. A majority of CBOs have designated on-site RJE coordinators manning peace rooms that were either setup by the affiliated CBO or inherited by them. With regards to questioning my participants about the kinds of RJE training rendered by them, a range of responses from conducting two to three trainings to over twelve trainings per year emerged, with a training duration range of two hours to two days. A majority of CBOs reported receiving private funds for their RJE work in addition to other government grants and individual school grants that they successfully garnered. The LOIR Scale was rendered to assess their level of organizational collaboration with their respective schools and gauge how functional the school-CBO partnership was. Most agencies stated that they were at the “partnering level” of the scale, which translates to the fact that schools and CBOs remain autonomous in their operations but reach mutual goals together with a central leadership group in place and a relatively high degree of communication (See details of the LOIR Scale attached to the Interview Protocol of affiliated CBOs in Appendix A).

Most CBOs conduct a school readiness and climate checklist review before partnering with a specific school to understand whether RJE has a potential to thrive at that school. For instance, they expect full support of the administration, data sharing, presence of a space for a peace room, information on the kinds of student organizations that exist, relations between staff and administration, amongst other information. As the program coordinator of the Dynamic Center, an agency working on curriculum development and

planning, streamlined their RJE and SEL work to keep students on track, in school and college bound states:

I wouldn't say selective, but we're very intentional on with who we partner, because we found that certain things need to be in place as receptor cell. So, strong supportive administration, right? So, like, you know, folks who really are bought-in and they're saying I really want to make this change, right. Actually being able to have a dedicated space in the building, so believe it or not a lot of our schools are like I have no space, and we're like we have to create a space. So that's another prerequisite for us. Ideally some systems and structures in place. So, that you do have some sort of a functioning culture and climate teamwork or care team, that you have a social worker on the staff that you-- some, some of these, kind of, what we call like things that just need to be there to make it happen. Deans who are, invested—they might not be skilled, they might not be trained—but they kind of are like on-board and would want to do it. So we have a screen.

The Dynamic Center's program manager's statement touches upon symbolic gestures such how having a supportive administration who believes in the potential of RJE at their school, can help inspire larger staff buy-in. At the same she alludes to having a physical space for RJE practices and functioning culture and climate and care teams²⁴ to help RJE flourish within schools. The Dynamic Center has built its reputation in the field of RJE and has developed a restorative curriculum that is used in a variety of platforms: ISS, SEL, and leadership development (Source: Agency's Website). They operate on a capacity building (independent RJE model)²⁵ in order to help schools sustain RJE practices without the assistance of an embedded agency. According to the Dynamic Center's program manager:

²⁴ These culture and climate or care/behavioral health teams exist across all schools and have gained a lot of prominence owing to the restructuring of the CPS SEL Umbrella (CASEL Report, March 2015)

²⁵ The independent versus outsourced RJE strategy was highlighted in previously in the Methodology section

We've recently restructured our model to reflect is this idea of capacity building. So we don't go into buildings to live there forever as we did in <school name>, [chuckles], but we're really intentionally thinking by the call of some of the principals we've worked with have liked. We need to be able to sustain this work ourselves. So how are we a catalyst--to, one, first, have the mindset and the awareness, and then, two, to start to begin to utilize the practice. So that eventually by year two and three we're not doing as much of the work but the work is being slowly taken on by folks in the building who have their receptor cells.

The Harmony Consortium also practiced such an independent RJE model, as their vision is to enhance teacher capacity to conduct RJE within their classrooms. In contrast, agencies like the Blossom Center and the Cherry Center believe that RJE sustainability is intimately linked to having a community partner embedded within their schools (outsourced RJE model). This is because school staff is over-burdened and often contend with competing priorities, which makes RJE another burdensome proposition. Hence an embedded agency would do a better job of conducting RJE practices. For instance, the program manager of the Blossom Center states that their outsourced model is successful given the fact that the parents who operate the peace centers at schools, hail from the same communities as their students which inadvertently helps build better connections compared to the staff at schools. In her opinion:

But, you know, they're not professionals, they're not therapists, they're counselors they, have been trained and we support them but they, at the end of the day, the way I like to frame it is that they are probably most successful because they're not part of your school, they're not employees of your school, because students may know them from the community and they open up to them easier than they would to you in the dean's office.

Despite CBOs stance with respect to the RJE model being outsourced versus being independent, agencies believed in the whole-school cultural change for RJE. They

unanimously felt that for RJE to bear fruit it requires time, patience, energy and resources. It is not a quick-fix solution and is definitely not another behavioral management program, which are rampant within CPS. RJE across the board is understood as overarching philosophy or as the literature states, “it is the glue that holds other SEL initiatives together” (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). As resonated by the program coordinator of the Harmony Consortium:

And we’re really big on that philosophy. We don’t want it to be just a program --- In the school --- That comes and goes. That happens a lot with C.P.S. We wanted to be something that is a philosophy. A philosophy is something that stays. It’s not a program.

The research convener of the Grand Center, a research center that forayed into RJE as a means of dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, spoke about the genesis of the Embrace Chicago Collaborative. This CBO collaborative called on multiple agencies that at the time operated in silos, to best come together to share their best practices in order to have greater collective impact. She alludes to placing continued pressure on the district to keep the sacredness of RJE processes especially in light of being understood as a philosophy and not a program. She states:

We realized, we recognized that there were lots of silos in the restorative justice community here in Chicago. So, a lot of organizations just sort of doing their individual --- You know, two schools here or a little bit work there and very much dependent on funding which we understand. But we felt that if everyone worked together there would be a greater impact. You know, recognizing our individual, sort of, work yet gathering at the table to work together to have, to create greater impacts. So, we started the RJ, the Embrace RJ group and, you know, out of that came, for example, this project and this one. And we’re working on a toolkit for CPS right now through Embrace. And more than anything, it’s just --- It’s really a supportive group and we help, sort of, brainstorm best practices and ideas. And provide support for one another.

Role of Community Based Organizations post policy reform

CBOs as stated in the previous section strived to place pressure on the central district to take on RJE as a replacement for zero-tolerance disciplinary sanctions that dominated CPS. CBO endeavors were met with some success when the Board in 2007 stripped the language of zero-tolerance and replaced it with RJE. However, despite the change in language at the time, zero-tolerance approaches were still the dominant paradigm. Hence CBOs and communities banded together once again in 2010, to place greater pressure on the district, which led to substantial changes in disciplinary policy in 2012 and more recently in 2014.

Alignment of the Offices of Social and Emotional Learning (OSEL) & Safety and Security (OS&S)

The district has been scrutinized in the past for its excessive expenditure on increasing surveillance in the form of metal detectors, security cameras etc., within schools (VOYCE, 2011). Historically, the OSEL and the OS&S have always operated in isolation. However, with the growing popularity of RJE and SEL within the district and throughout the city of Chicago with initiatives such as the Mayor's Commission for a Safer Chicago propagating the growth of restorative school communities, these offices began to align their efforts. For instance, the former head of OSEL said:

CPS is providing support largely through training and coaching. We have been advocating for this work and we are also fund raising now, as the need is greater than what is available. There are citywide coalitions that are taking place- I was on the Mayor's Commission on RP community. So yes, there is a lot of forced aligning.

There is a strong impetus from both offices, to alter the image surrounding heightened surveillance and the presence of police and security personnel within CPS. They are working to replace the notion of policing and law enforcement with safety and relationship building. For instance, security officers were originally instated by the OS&S within public schools to beef up the safety and security measures at schools and assist police personnel, thereby portraying a tough, strict persona to students. However with RJE and SEL pervading into schools, the OS&S is training their security personnel to alter their hardy image and make them more amicable to students, especially since they are probably the first personnel that students encounter upon entering the school building. Security personnel are now being trained to assist other culture and climate and care teams to de-escalate potential conflict and build a calm, structured and positive learning environment at CPS. As stated by the current head of the OS&S:

We are striving to change the paradigm. Their job was about enforcement. Now we tell them that their job is to build relationships. Most often security officers are the first person that a student sees- hence the student needs to feel welcome and safe. We are moving in the right direction. We have police officers in 72 High Schools and we are building relationships with them. It seems to be working well so far! The feedback from the students has been positive. We also want to see how this is impacting suspensions- for instance, the security officer by virtue of having built a relationship with the kid, knows the person and if the kid is not bubbly like he normally is, then security officers can notice and ask what's wrong? They want to understand your personality. In the past, the rhetoric was- what is your problem? If the kid talked back then the problem was escalated. Hence we have taken on a more proactive stance and are engaged in interventions. We work to prevent intervention and de-escalation.

The district has expressed pride in the most recent alterations made to the SCC and believe that the district should receive their due credit. They acknowledge the role played by CBOs in bringing RJE's potential to their notice and in fact incorporated several of the

CBOs' suggestions into the more recent amendments made to the SCC. However despite the RJE efforts being publicized by the central district personnel, CBOs have been a bit skeptical of the district's true intentions behind backing RJE. A few reflected on the fact, that the CPS Board historically "got into the RJ game" to smooth the transitions caused by the massive school closures that had occurred over the past three years in Chicago. Firstly, for schools that were being closed down, RJE provided an opportunity and a safe space for students to talk about how they felt about their school being closed. Secondly, schools that were left standing in high closure areas were using welcoming circles for the arrival of new students.

CBOs as consultants & the RP Coaching Model

The RP coaching model was born according to the program manager of the Cherry Center as a means of dealing with school closures, as stated in the previous section. The history of the RP coaching model according to her is:

So, when the coaching model started...there was some pots of money for social emotional learning -When the schools had the big --- All schools were closed which was...what was that 2013 ---When they shut them down. And so C.P.S office of social emotional learning, gave the Cherry Center or these schools, money to have coaches or alternative staff come in to do circles about, talking about-What does this look like. You know, that your school is closing, how can I process this. Then the next year they still had money. And then we did that with the welcoming schools. So the schools that were receiving the students. And that was the very beginning of the coaching model. And it was very kind of like you go in and do whatever. Basically it was like..that in the bad press- we're closing all these schools and we have to also provide them with resources. So and then from there, I think, that was what really grew into this coaching model. Then they identified a series of schools that really were needed more social emotional support. And then that numbers in turned grown. And so with that growing also, I think, the schools hear about it. And the interest grows as well. So, that is how the coaching part of it.

In light of the above quotation, this study will deconstruct what the RP coaching model is, what it has grown to become and in what manner are CBOs involved in this model. As the Cherry Center's program manager states, the genesis of the RP coaching model was the district's first gateway into RJE as a means of quelling the concerns regarding school closures. Hence this RP coaching model almost serves as a "Band-Aid" approach without truly understanding the need for RJE to counter the negative effects of school disciplinary policy. Because the district's first response to RJE was not to alter their SCC but to smoothen the chaos that had been caused by the closing down of CPS schools, concerns were raised about the district's intentions about RJE.

More recently, the RP Coaching Model has morphed into the district providing financial and training RJE resources through the appointment of an RP coach at local schools. The RP Coaching Model is a training of the trainer model, wherein an RP coach usually assigned by OSEL comes into the building to train school personnel on restorative practices for approximately 5 hours a week. Over and above the RP coaching fund, according to the current head of OSEL, school principals who prioritize RJE at their schools can apportion their school's discretionary funds towards RJE. The current head of OSEL provides more details about the RP coaching model:

From our office, we fund RP coaching, and we primarily use our money towards providing training, paying an extended stipend for staff and provide small SEL-Support... We have coaches in 70 schools. RP coaches are assigned based on need and they rotate from one school to another. Any school can reach out to us for training and coaching... RP leaders focus on training of full time staff and partner with community partners. RP coaching has access to other types of support. This includes an external coach who comes in 1-2 days a week; provide support on aspects like training, peace circles and classroom practices. RP coach trains folks in the district on peer conferencing and how to use the RJ tool. Network specialists also get trained on RJ.

The above quotation emphasizes how the district is spreading the word about RJE throughout its school machinery right from coaching the district personnel, to network officials and individual school staff at the local school level. The big question is- who are the RP coaches who are rendering such a model? The answer is, these very CBOs who brought about RJE reform in the first place.

Post policy reform or amendments made to the SCC, CBOs have become RJE consultants to the district. The district continues to call on CBOs to seek their advice and recommendations surrounding disciplinary policy and at the same time the district is contracting CBOs to become assigned RP coaches at the local school level. One of the biggest reasons why CBOs are being requisitioned as RP coaches is because this new model is more revenue generating compared to erstwhile RJE whole school models. According to the Opportunity Analyst of the Cherry Center, who is in charge of raising grants and money for the agency, CPS maintains a vendor relationship with CBOs through a general contract document called a task order (See Appendix B for task order details from the MoUs). An amendment to the task order is made on an annual basis wherein agencies can alter the provision of services they render at schools. This makes the RP coaching process more “business-like” and efficient according to the Cherry Center’s opportunity analyst. While speaking about the newfound RP coach revenue generation model for CBOs, this is what the Opportunity Analyst had to say:

So basically there was a point when we didn’t make too much money off of RJ. I would say this is almost like a new revenue model for us. Now we have this setup where we get these purchase orders and as long as we’re sending specialists to schools on a regular basis we’re getting an hourly rate for our work. That is very, very different from how we are reimbursed for our other work. And it wasn’t how this setup was a few years ago. And it’s been only recent that CPS has been interested in restorative practices.

However, several agencies have raised red flags about the RP coaching model. They believe that such a model goes against the original vision and fabric of bringing about whole-school RJE change within CPS, especially since culture change takes a lot of time. For instance, the program manager of the Blossom Center believes that this RP coaching model lacks depth and is insufficient to fulfill the dire needs of failing CPS schools. She states:

I'm sure you've, kind of, gotten to this point of understanding that CPS has invested quite a bit in terms of RJ coaches and those kinds of things, and you know that's kind of part of, in our conversations with CPS, of, understanding that just because you have an RJ coach doesn't mean that you've solved your RJ issue...that you're addressing it completely, because most of the time the RJ coaches aren't intensively working with the teachers, and much less if at all with the students

In a similar vein, the RJE trainer from the Imagine Center expressed her frustration and disappointment with CPS's lack of commitment to the true cause of RJE. While stating her biggest fears, she felt that the district has usurped whole school RJE change with the RP coaching model to essentially jeopardize the years of momentum and efforts built by CBOs and communities. The RP coaching model is not as resource intensive or expensive as the whole school model. Thus, in her own words she states:

But the model sucks quite honestly. And so, you know. It is. It's cheap. And I actually could say you're doing something. And my -- and our biggest fear has been -- and you can also say we tried them and it didn't work, right?

Presently, CBOs operate as both RP coaches hired and funded by the district as well as generate their own funds to continue whole-school RJE practices within schools. This throws up interesting questions surrounding CBOs resource dependency on the district given their budgetary constraints as actors in the RJE process. CBOs in the past primarily served to

voice the concerns of minority, marginalized communities and were very critical of the CPS district, which had caused the school-to-prison pipeline in the first place. However with the CBOs newfound role as consultants to CPS, communities and local school personnel could potentially question whether CBOs are now working hand-in-glove with the district, thereby jeopardizing their legitimacy and reputation at the local level. Additionally, with CBOs becoming RP coaches at schools and potentially vying for the same CPS pot of gold, fidelity of RJE practices is brought into question.

Shortlisted Community Based Organization-School Partnership Contexts

Given the background of CBOs pre and post changes at the policy level, this section specifically focuses on the four cases school cases with regards to their RJE adoption process. Table 5 contains details regarding the nature and intensity of RJE at each of the shortlisted schools under the new principal leadership. Table 5 highlights the type of partnership modality between the specific school and affiliated CBO, in terms of whether it's an outsourced or an independent model, the year of the partnership and specific details regarding the nature and intensity of the partnership in terms of frequency of contact, the kinds of RJE responses provided, existence of the peace room, training and professional development details, funding sources and the LOIR measure, that highlights the depth of the agency-school collaboration.

Table 5: Nature and intensity of shortlisted CBO-school partnerships

Partnership Modality	Agency	School	Year of RJ	# days per week	Hierarchy of RJ responses: Universal (U), Targeted (T) & Intensive (I)	Peace Room	# of RJ Trainings	Avg Training Duration	Funding	LOIR ⁽¹⁾
Outsourced	Blossom Center (former)	Westshore	2010	4	U T I	Yes	12+	4 hours	Multiple sources	C
Independent	Harmony Consortium	Timber	2013	4	U T I	Yes	Multiple	2 hours	Pvt Grant	P
Outsourced	Cherry Center	Somerset Academy	1998	3	T I	Yes	NA	NA	State funded	C
Independent	Dynamic Center	Sunshine	2013	4	U T I	Yes	12 to 15	2-3 hours	School+ Center Grants	C

(1) Levels of Organizational Integration, a standardized scale that highlights the depth of agency-school collaboration. Scale ranges from independent (I)=0, Networking (N)=1, Cooperating (C)=2, Partnering (P)=3, Unifying (U)=4

CBOs and the RJE seed

As one can observe from Table 5, at Westshore, Sunshine and Somerset the idea of RJE or the RJE seed was first sown by the CBOs. The Blossom Center, a family focused CBO, established its parent run peace center at Westshore in 2010. Under the guidance of the previous administration, the peace center was setup by a parent following the tragic death of her child, a former student at Westshore. The Center was instrumental in creating a Parent-to-Parent Guide since their stand is that parents have to be involved and take initiative in local schools regarding RJE. This resource defines RJE as “Restorative justice emphasizes teaching the student who misbehaved and offering a student a chance to ‘repair the harm’ that he or she caused”. The Blossom Center pieced together funding for running Westshore’s parent-led peace center from multiple sources and were operating the center for four days a week. Westshore’s parent-run peace center was touted as a model for other schools and gained a lot of media attention backed by the Mayor himself. According to Westshore’s current principal:

Actually our school was showcased as a platinum school two years ago when Rahm Emmanuel and then CEO, Barbara Bennett came and did the press conference here around the change of the Student Code of Conduct and how Westshore is a model of where they would want to see schools move towards.

Somerset Academy has been called the birthplace of RJE in CPS. The RJE seed was planted by the Cherry Center through their peer-jury programming nearly two decades ago. Cherry Center’s program manager speaks about the history of peer jury programming at Somerset, given their standing as a youth development agency with an overarching emphasis on gaining youth voices through RJE:

It came out of one of our youth development programs working with youth at Somerset Academy. And the youth there --- had, the constant that we were hearing was that their peers were being suspended for minor reasons, getting pushed out. Or there would be a conflict and people would get suspended and they'd come back. There would be no, you know basically conflict was still there. And the students really wanted to have more of an involvement in the process and discipline. So through research and working with the youth, we came up and on what we called then the peer jury model.

Interestingly, the Cherry Center also began their RJE work at Sunshine high school back in 2011-2012. They had been contracted by the previous administration to train teachers RJE as a part of their classroom management techniques, aspects that closely mirror CPS' present RP coaching model. Timber was the only school wherein the idea of RJE was planted with Timber's rebirth as a small school back in 2010. Timber's founding members decided to enmesh the idea of RJE and lay the foundations of the school atop of that. The English teacher, one of the founding members of Timber, instated the peace room after convincing the administration of its need. She creatively combined RJE with poetry. The founding members carried out RJE practices themselves without the assistance of a CBO in 2010. Timber's current principal states:

So my understanding is that when the school was founded, they really talked, or put restorative justice into the proposal for the school. Just as this idea that if students were engaged in the process that involved restoration from the beginning, they would be more apt to resolve conflict in a restorative way. And that, it would build appropriate relationships with teachers and students. So I know that they used to have things like advisory where students were taught different restorative practices. The block of time during the day that was called 'community time', also was a point in time when those restorative practices were supposed to be taught to kids.

It appears that all schools, except Timber High School, decided to adopt RJE largely because the seed and need for RJE was planted by their respective partner agencies. CBO

objectives as stated earlier were to infuse RJE at the local school level and create best practices or models to showcase the power and potential of RJE. Across all schools, the adoption of RJE predates the alterations made to the SCC (2012-14).

Principal Discretion: CBO or Bust

Despite the RJE seed being planted by CBOs at three out of the four school cases, CBO activity looks very different at these schools ever since the current administration took over their leadership roles. The principals, at these schools ultimately determined the plight of these CBOs at these schools in terms of whether to continue, discontinue or replace their CBO partnerships.

For instance, at Westshore, as stated previously by the program coordinator of the Blossom Center, RJE ought to be completely parent and community driven because the CBO felt that community is the one constant that withstands staff turnover and turmoil within CPS. However, the current administration felt differently. Even though the principal acknowledged that the RJE seed was planted by the Blossom Center in conjunction with the previous principal who infused a very student-centered, caring ethos at the school; the current administration at the start of the 2015-16 school year decided to forego their partnership with the Blossom Center. Westshore's school social worker currently operates as the RJE coordinator, as RJE programming is being carried out internally at Westshore. In fact the current principal has also been appointed an RP coach to support Westshore's internal RJE model. As per the assistant principal at Westshore, the Blossom Center existed in isolation within the building and were not very effective, hence the administration felt that RJE implementation would only occur if they conduct RJE on their own without the need of the Blossom Center:

So, I say that because they had a room, and like it was a peace center or whatever, but they didn't do anything. But the difference is it almost like planted the seed. Like, we felt we were supposed to be doing like... their presence encouraged us to kind of implement it more... I feel like what happened, the former principal was very much focused on like giving kids second chances and understanding why kids did things. But it wasn't part of a formal process. And so, we really came in and were like: this is what we're doing. This is how we're gonna solve problems. And so, it was more institutionalizing, these like little things that were happening around. It was like; you know there was a peace center, but how often were circles happening and were they productive? Now yes, they are. And they're happening. And that's how we solve problems. But that wasn't necessarily what was happening before.

Even though the Blossom Center was instrumental in bringing RJE into Westshore, the activities of the Blossom Center appeared to operate in isolation of the rest of the building, hence the current administration decided that they would do a better job than the CBO to implement and integrate RJE by building internal school capacity. However this could have also been an economically motivated decision, because when the new principal came into her role at Westshore, the school has been facing issues of under-enrolment, which usually translates into poorer resources from the district.

A similar story unfolded at Sunshine. When the current principal at Sunshine was brought on in 2013, he too carried out an assessment of Cherry Center's performance with respect to RJE. The principal was not satisfied with the Center's work because they were out of tune with the school's vision, internal problems within the Cherry Center were rampant, and more importantly they were unable to bring about true RJE change as per their contract details. Thus the principal at Sunshine decided to discontinue their partnership with the Cherry Center, as he states:

Well, when we were part of this grant with the Cherry Center, there was the school-to-prison pipeline thing. Anyways, it was a big grant that like four or five schools were in

on, and the whole idea of the grant was: how can we start doing restorative justice within the classroom while the teacher is teaching? So, that grant was really trying to get teachers to use more restorative approaches within the classroom. And so, we have like a coach who was doing that with a group of our teachers. Mr. <name of Assistant Principal> was part of that too. Unfortunately the people that were running the grant didn't sort of hold, I didn't feel they really held up in their end of the bargain. To me, different people came and went, and just fade away. I think our teachers got a few good things out of it, but it could have been more.

However, unlike Westshore that is carrying out RJE internally without the assistance of a CBO, Sunshine's principal decided to bring on a new partner in 2013, the Dynamic Center. This was because Sunshine's principal was acutely aware of the Dynamic Center's work in the areas of SEL, advisory curriculum and RJE owing to having witnessed their competence in the previous school where he worked as an Assistant Principal. Therefore, he was adamant to bring them on as his "lead thought partner". On looking at Table 5 we can observe that the Dynamic Center operates on an independent model, which is about building up systems and structures within Sunshine with a clear exit strategy for themselves. The RJE coordinator, appointed from the Dynamic Center spells out how the partnership between Sunshine and the Dynamic Center began owing to their past association:

So Mr. <name of school principal>, the principal, we had a former relationship with him because we used to he used to work at <CPS high school name> and we used to sort of work at <CPS high school name> in our seminar work. So we initially got introduced to Mr. <name of school principal> through working with the principal at <CPS high school name> and Mr. <name of school principal> was the assistant principal at the time. I think he really just like fell in love with the Dynamic Center and the work that we do. And so he just saw that when he was a principal at his own school he wanted to bring the Dynamic Center into the school. And so that's how our relationship started.

Sunshine's RJE coordinator is implicitly pointing to the reputation and legitimacy that the Dynamic Center has built as an agency in the field of RJE & SEL, which was the primary reason as to why they were hired by Sunshine's principal in the first place. The partnership at Sunshine has proven to be very fruitful and therefore the contract has been renewed more recently. At Somerset Academy, the Cherry Center continues to operate but not as extensively as it used to. The popularity of the Cherry Center has waxed and waned at Somerset. This has been because of issues of funding for the upkeep of the center and a lack of teacher engagement with the Center's RJE activities. The Cherry Center currently operates only two days a week and receives their student case referrals from the Dean, as the Dean states:

Well it's definitely been a while; Somerset was one of the very first schools to have restorative practices in place. The former assistant principal was very much the lead in working with the Cherry Center, which is our partners, and getting restorative practices brought here to Somerset Academy. There have been some waves, and that's been on the involvement of the teachers here as far as the Cherry Center goes, because they're an outside agency, you know funding always plays a big part. And the supports and the partnership we have with them, but it is definitely still up and running. It just looks a little bit different now than it did in the past. Early on we had, staff members that was trained and were able to hold, peer mediation and, used to call what was the other one? The peer jury after school. But once again that was all, you know, funded more heavily then, then it is now. We currently are still working with the Cherry Center. We have, a staff member and some interns that come in. Monday is the main day where they speak with students. But then they're here couple days out of the week also. The schedules just changed cause we had another shift and staff there as of recent times, so, right now we are looking at the two days a week that they're here. And so how that goes is that they have a dedicated room where they meet with students, and we provide them, background information of an incident that took place.

More recently, there have been personnel changes within the Cherry Center. The former RJE coordinator who had been at Somerset for three years, quit the agency unexpectedly, and thus had to be replaced by the current RJE coordinator. However, this personnel transition within the Cherry Center has caused some rift between the current leadership and the Cherry Center. According to the new RJE coordinator, the current principal should be optimizing the partnership with the Cherry Center instead of being frustrated with the personnel changes that occurred at the Center. She states:

I think, Miss <name of current principal> was kind of frustrated when < name of former RJE coordinator> left. So, then she's frustrated with us, so then she, when we had that kind of meeting, me, < name of former RJE coordinator>, and our boss and Miss <name of current principal>, she was very like "we've being done this on our own, since you've left". Basically, we don't need you but so that's why I think we're getting kind of those referrals from our students, which is frustrating for us but also, we want to kind of respect like, you are the principal, you have to make those choices and we're really here to support you, how you see fit. So, I think our mentality, at least, like I mean the schools year is near an end, to kind of just accommodate as much as possible and then really have those conversations. How is next year going to look? Like, can we get back to the place where we were? It's annoying that something like, you know the grant and that kind of stuff, impacts the actual work that we do.

Given the Somerset principal's statement in the above quotation, "we've been doing this on our own, since you've left", makes one wonder that perhaps Somerset will be following in Westshore's footsteps with regards to potentially discontinuing their partnership with the Cherry Center and carrying out RJE internally. In fact, during data collection phase, Somerset's principal did not suggest that the Cherry Center's RJE coordinator partake of the study, but instead interview the Behavioral Health Specialist, who operates out of the health center at Somerset. The principal on multiple occasions expressed her satisfaction with the Behavioral Health Center and her disappointment with the RJE coordinator. It was out of

necessity and personal accord that I managed to setup an interview with Cherry Center's RJE coordinator at Somerset. Such aspects point to the fact that the Cherry Center continues to operate within Somerset however its status as a reputable RJE agency has fallen and is presently barely able to stay afloat at Somerset²⁶.

At Timber High School, in 2013, the Harmony Consortium raised grant money to hire a full time RJ coordinator to operate the peace room and build internal staff capacity. It remains unclear the circumstances that led to the decision to hire the Harmony Consortium, but the most plausible argument is that it was a decision taken by one of the past principal's at Timber. In 2013, both the English teacher and the RJE coordinator ran the peace room for about a year, until the teacher was sent back to full-time teaching because of budgetary reasons. The present RJE coordinator is very grateful for the RJE groundwork that was laid out by the former RJE coordinator, i.e., the English teacher. As a consequence her transition into her role at Timber has been smoother. She states:

So the very unique thing about Timber is that, this peace room was kind of already in the works thanks to another teacher <name of English teacher>. Yeah, she's amazing and I know her also through my youth development program at <name of University>. So when I had applied to this program I was like, all right I'm perfect because I already know her and like we're on the same page. And so she had been, at that time the school had enough money to pay her to be an RJ coordinator for the school on the school's part. So she was kind of like transitioning into that position and then I was coming in and we were going to be working together. And then, in the middle of the year she had to go back to teaching because they cut a lot of funding. And so then it was just me, but a lot of the work that was done to initiate the peace room was on her behalf.

²⁶ The agency has not provided me any details regarding their contract renewal. Hence their potential discontinuance at Somerset is only conjectural.

The program manager of the Harmony Consortium was disheartened about the former teacher RJE coordinator being sent back into the classroom to teach, as in his opinion Timber was a shining example of how teachers can spearhead RJE reform within schools. He expressed his disappointment with the change at Timber:

One of the things --- and this was a challenge and a success, actually. It's kind of ironic. At Timber we had a teacher --- it was the only school of the four that we're working with that they had actually hired. The principal said, we're going to make this person an R.J. coordinator and we were beyond delighted. We were elated. I mean, it's just like --- yes, this is exactly what we're talking about. Exactly. And she had the background. She knew all these stuff. Three, four months in to this work, maybe even a little bit less. I'm not sure. She was then pulled out of that position. And to, to fill a spot of a teacher that had left. And we're like, you were going to be our shining example of what this is in a school that really needs this work. And, I mean, we're crushed because --- but see, that's, that's the issue. We fund what we, what we see as a --- a priority. And, unfortunately although the principal saw it as a priority, because obviously you put it in that position. Someone left the building, a teacher; he needed to fill that spot.

The above statement is indicative of the competing priorities schools contend with wherein the former RJE teacher coordinator had to be sent back into the classroom to teach because of issues of teacher attrition and budgetary reasons.

Across all four schools, the current principal's inherited the respective CBOs. Westshore's principal was dissatisfied with the Blossom Center and discontinued their partnership. Sunshine's principal replaced the Cherry Center with the Dynamic Center. Timber's current principal is grateful for Harmony Consortium's RJE efforts and decided to retain them at Timber. Unfortunately Timber's 2016-17 contract could not be renewed much to everyone's chagrin at Timber. Somerset Academy is dissatisfied with the workings of the Cherry Center, thereby throwing up questions about the future of the Cherry Center at Somerset. Thus through this process, one can observe that CBO RJE efforts only gain

fruition with their respective school partners, if the principals believe in the worth and the potential of the CBO to carry out RJE implementation and integration beyond adoption.

Besides determining the effectiveness of CBOs in terms of their RJE value addition at their schools, principals also have to contend with whether hiring a CBO is an economically viable option for their schools. This was especially evident at Westshore and Timber located catering mostly to minority communities, wherein both schools are facing competing priorities with regards to hiring CBOs for RJE vis a vis increasing their student enrolments. Such competing demands was not so evident at Somerset and Sunshine, schools mostly catering to white students, as one can observe that renewing CBO partnerships was an easier proposition for them. In addition, CBOs themselves have internal staff capacity issues, which makes the partnership process all the more precarious. Hence local school level leaders could essentially determine what is the best course of action for their school especially with respect to choosing to continue, discontinue or replace CBOs for institutionalizing RJE.

Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter highlights the significance of the CBOs with regards to bringing about RJE reform within the CPS district as a whole as well as amongst individual schools. On applying the institutional entrepreneurship perspective, we can observe that CBOs serve as institutional entrepreneurs because they are catalyzing change or reform within schools. Since CBOs exist outside the CPS institutional context, they have enabled this social position (Dorado, 2005) and have taken the lead in being the impetus for and giving direction to RJE change reform within the CPS (Eisenstadt, 1980).

Towards catalyzing RJE reform, CBOs have employed a series of strategies at both the policy level and at the local school level; to help shape how the RJE idea can get instated and potentially institutionalized at schools (Hardy & Maguire, 2008). For instance,

to begin with, CBOs conducted a thorough assessment of the situation on the ground, with respect to voicing community concerns surrounding CPS' exclusionary policies. Their research endeavors led to the creation of discourses and texts in the form of reports such as the Elementary Justice Campaign Report, the HIGH HOPES Campaign Report, VOYCE Report, RJE CPS toolkit amongst others which focused on de-legitimizing existing institutional arrangements (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Creed et al., 2002) i.e., the traditional, punitive disciplinary policy has successfully demonstrated the current RJE institutionalization project will assure superior results (Boxenbaum & Battilana, 2005; Fligstein, 1997; Seo & Creed, 2002).

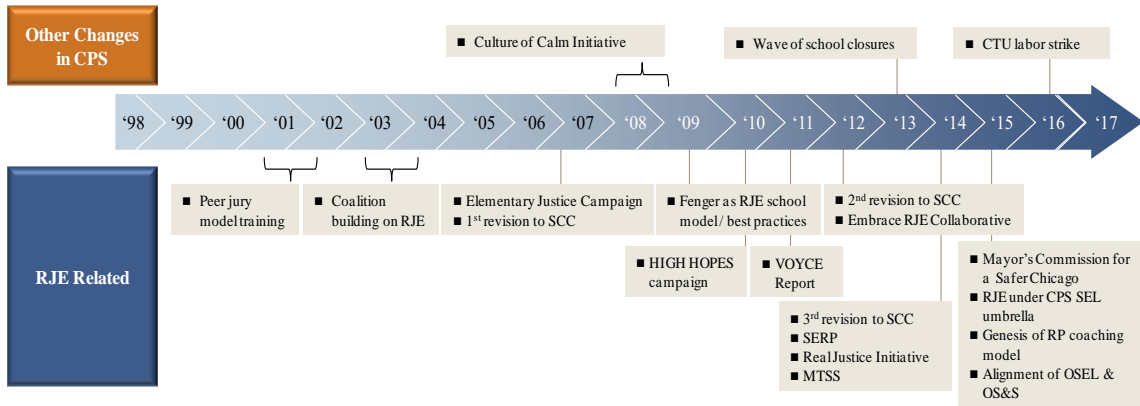
To enlist allies and mount political action (Seo & Creed, 2002), especially those in the decision-making capacities (at both the policy level, i.e., the Chicago Board of Education as well as principals of individual schools), CBOs used their skills to leverage both tangible and intangible resources. CBOs used their social capital and skills to raise grant money and funds, i.e., tangible financial assets (Greenwood et al., 2002) and convinced individual school principals to adopt RJE. By creating successful RJE best practices and whole school models, CBOs legitimated their reputation and formal authority of being RJE experts in this emerging field (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Such CBO strategies bode well for them at both the local school levels, as being a legitimate voice for marginalized communities as well as being an expert to influence change at the policy level. Ideally, CBOs were instrumental in designing institutional arrangements by influencing regulative elements, i.e., bringing about a change in disciplinary policy that mandates the uptake of new practices (Leca, Battilana & Boxenbaum, 2008).

Matland's Ambiguity-Conflict Model of Policy Implementation also provides insight into comprehending how policy adoption decisions unfolded within CPS. To better explain

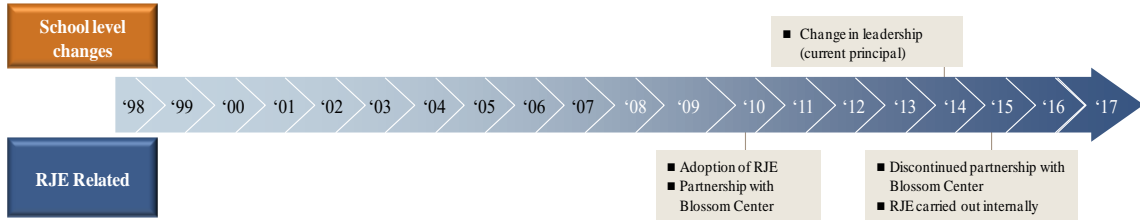
the temporality of the unfolding of RJE reform at the policy level, this study has mapped out a timeline of RJE reform at the policy level and compared that against the timeline of the individual shortlisted schools (Refer to Figure 8). Figure 8 outlines the timeline of RJE at both the policy and local school levels from 1998 to 2017, a period of about 20 years. 1998 was chosen because it marked the birth of the RJE peer jury program at Somerset Academy. Throughout the timelines at both the district and school levels, I highlight the key RJE milestones reached and also speak to other changes happening at the policy level, for example CTU labor strikes and at the local school level, changes in principal leadership. Expanding Matland's (1995) theoretical framing, tracing out such a timeline is a good starting point to understand RJE adoption at both individual schools and the policy level, and such a timeline would further help understand how changes at the policy and the local level influence one another for subsequent implementation and institutionalization of RJE.

Figure 8: Mapping the RJE Timeline at both the policy and local school levels based on the study findings

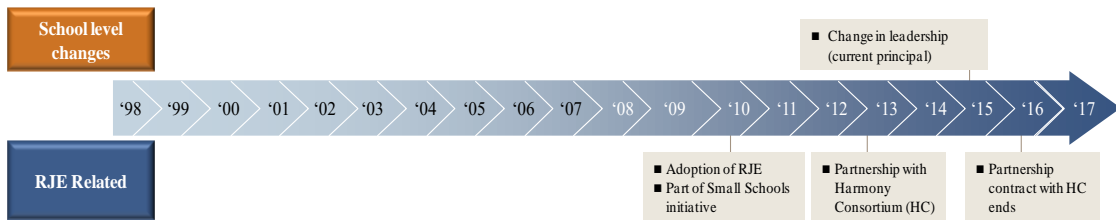
CPS Central District Level



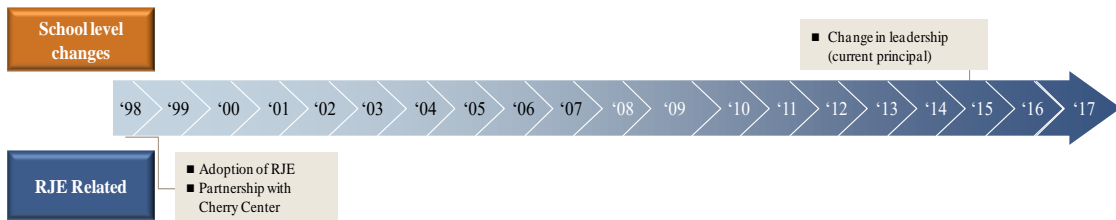
Westshore



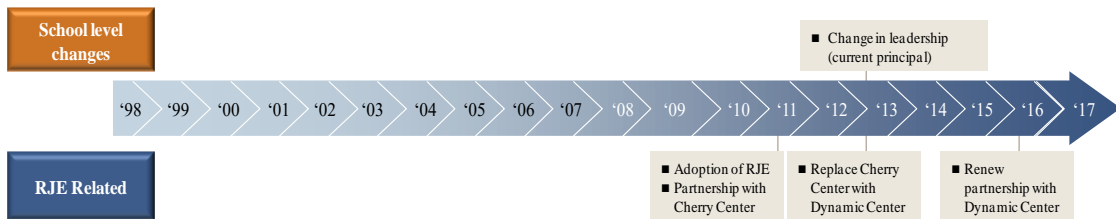
Timber



Somerset



Sunshine



Using Matland's two by two matrix as well as the timeline put forth in Figure 8, the findings of this study highlight that RJE policy was shaped through a process of experimental implementation, which entails high policy ambiguity and low policy conflict. The central principle driving this type of implementation is that contextual conditions dominate the process, wherein outcomes depend heavily on the resources and actors present in micro implementing environments (Matland, 1995). Local level actors, specifically CBOs began bringing about RJE reform at the local school level with variance across partnership locations- like Somerset and the Cherry Center (1998) and Westshore and the Blossom Center (2010)- were emerging RJE best practices. Coalitions such as the Elementary Justice and HIGH HOPES Campaigns provided an opportunity for the street level bureaucrats to use their knowledge and learning to pool their resources and shape policy at the district level (Matland, 1995). Hence CBO coalition building adopted a bottom-up experimental perspective, which eventually led to a change in CPS district policy.

Presently, given the change in policy that has taken place, current findings underscore that both the central district personnel as well as the affiliated CBOs are hopeful and excited about the prospects of RJE's expansion throughout the district. Both sets of actors continue to work in close collaboration and consultation as the momentum regarding RJE continues to grow. However, fears are abound with regards to a potential district takeover of RJE, in the form of the superficial RP coaching model. Despite CBO concerns about the RP coaching model, the district is enlisting several of them, as RP coaches gives it a more economically viable model. Hence we can observe that partnership precarity is emerging beyond the adoption of RJE and shall be more explored in the upcoming chapters.

CHAPTER 7

SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS

Implementation refers to putting any novel idea, program, and initiative into action to ensure repeatability and efficiency. This chapter seeks to address the second research question, i.e., what are the specific factors and processes that aid in the successful implementation of RJE across public high schools. The previous chapter's findings point to how the RJE seed across most of the schools was planted by their affiliated CBO, thereby ensuring that the school has been readied for change. However, as stated in the innovation implementation framework, it is important to move beyond adoption towards implementation of an innovation in order to allow the innovation to bear fruit (Klein & Knight, 2005).

Using the lens of the innovation implementation, institutional entrepreneurship and Matland's policy implementation frameworks, a comparative analysis of the data collected points towards three major themes or factors that affect the successful implementation of RJE- Leadership, Communication and Culture. The leadership theme highlights the significance of how principals need to wholeheartedly support their CBO partners to successfully implement RJE. The mechanisms of doing so includes the school leadership's ability to universalize relational practices such as RJE and SEL within schools and make evident the need and worth of RJE to gain staff buy-in. Communication or message management is critical for any change initiative to gain momentum. Thus, this theme comprises of the kinds of awareness generation and training/ professional development activities currently pursued at schools, as well as staff perceiving the RJE approach as being firm, fair and consistent as purported in the literature. Finally, the culture theme throws light on the fact that each school has their own sub-cultures that affects RJE implementation

process. The level of CBO-partner immersion, with regards to whether the affiliated CBO is in tune with the pulse and the direction of the school as well as the morale of the staff, which is usually impacted by external forces such as relationship to the central district, past association with RJE, neighborhood gentrification, staff attrition amongst others- significantly contributes towards the culture theme.

By using a comparative case study framework, this study compares and contrasts each of the schools vis a vis their performance across these three themes. The chapter concludes with a discussion on how the various theoretical frameworks help explain the factors and processes for the successful implementation of RJE across schools.

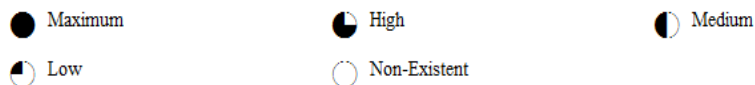
Comparative analysis of Restorative Justice implementation across schools

Using the three major themes running across the schools, this study created a tabulation using a Harvey Balls diagrammatic framework. Harvey Balls are commonly used in comparison tables for qualitative research to indicate the degree to which a particular item meets a particular criterion (Refer to Table 6). A comparative analysis on the successful implementation of RJE began with creating a code list for each school context. After having made a code list for each of the schools, the study compares and contrasts common themes that emerged across the four schools. The use of the framing has enabled the plotting plot of the degree of prevalence of specific aspects that comprised each theme based on the frequency and the degree to which personnel spoke about a particular criterion. For example, how staff buy-in is critical for believing in RJE with staff members looking towards their principal leaders to set the right example. Such a matrix helped gauge the performance of each of the schools across each criterion to better explain the process of successful RJE implementation.

Table 6: School comparison chart for RJE implementation

	Leadership		Communication		Culture	
	Universalize Relational Practice	Buy-In	Awareness / Training	Firm, Fair, Consistent	Partner Immersion	Staff Morale
Westshore	●	◐	◑	◑	○	◑
Timber	◑	◑	◑	◑	◑	◑
Sunshine	◑	◑	◑	◑	●	◑
Somerset	◑	◑	◑	○	○	◑

Degree of Prevalance (Harveyballs indicate the relative degree to which the characteristic is met by the respective schools)



Leadership

The leadership theme comprises of two critical factors, the ability of partnerships to prioritize and universalize relational practices, like RJE and SEL within their schools and their ability to gain staff buy-in. As one can observe from Table 6, Westshore high school fared the best compared to the other schools, followed by Sunshine.

As stated previously, the principal of Westshore decided to discontinue her partnership with the Blossom Center because she felt that her own staff could do a better job of implementing RJE on their own. Towards this end, the principal has been instrumental in generating an internal handbook called “The Westshore Way” at her school. The “Westshore Way” serves as a guide for staff to follow specific protocols for particular disciplinary infractions (See Appendix E for a snippet of the internal handbook). According to the Assistant Principal, the Westshore Way lays out clear universal expectations and she

expressed pride in the fact that Westshore's document preceded the RJE amendments made to the SCC, thereby implying that Westshore was ahead of the SCC curve. The SCC currently mandates RJE practices across the district, but Westshore has been using their guide or handbook before the SCC changes came to be. The Assistant Principal at Westshore states:

Sure. So, the Westshore Way, it's a list of, I think it's 9 things that students, that we, you know, this is the way we do things here at Westshore. So, really like laying out in the ways that we repeat regularly what it means to be a student at Westshore. You know, being prepared, being a good community member, coming to school on time, dressing appropriately. Like those kinds of things. You know, being on time. Then everything we do kind of revolves around that, you know. And we also made up very clear what we expect from teachers, what we expect from them to handle through like their classroom structure versus what we think should be handled through the dean's office. At the end of the day, we're dealing with humans, so it doesn't all fit as neatly as we'd like it to. I think that, and we also have to fit inside of CPS's Student Code of Conduct, which luckily for us we actually were kind of ahead of the curve. So, now there's a lot more mandated restorative practices. I feel like we're already doing all that. Now we actually have a handbook we can look at that is aligned with the way we do things.

At Sunshine high school, the dynamic principal, who is a staunch believer in RJE assisted the central district with making alterations to the SCC as he says, " I mean, I helped write the thing, I helped write the newer version with the more restorative mindset". Given his involvement at the district level, he wanted to ensure that RJE ought to be successfully implemented with fidelity at his school. Thus, when he came on board in 2013, besides hiring the reputable Dynamic Center he also brought along a few of his personnel from the previous school he worked at, since they shared his passionate ideals surrounding RJE.

In order for the Dynamic Center's RJE efforts to yield impact, Sunshine's principal has focused on creating a unique school identity, denoted by an acronym, symbolizing a

culture of expectations for students and staff at Sunshine. Such aspects were discussed during the culture and climate team meeting wherein the team members spoke of “What does it mean to be respectful?” “Accept responsibilities for one’s actions” and “Keep track of time and keep your phones away”. Sunshine’s assistant principal, also a firm believer of RJE, spoke about how their new visionary leader has helped the school turn around from its past probationary status, given the front-end work of universalizing relational practices. He says:

I think Sunshine used to be the school that had a lot of trauma. The culture wasn’t good. There were a lot of fights, gangs have infiltrated. Slowly, we’ve changed the culture to kind of shift around two different sets of things. So, there’s expectations, which show pride and respect, address for success, and, stay focused...The other part that we really push is the values of the school – family, integrity, service, and tenacity – and I think just kind of really embedding those ideas in the conversations with students and staff. I think the cultures slowly shifted over. And I think once it’s like rolling a rock up the hill and down the hill. The way I look at it, it takes a lot of work upfront, but it gains momentum. The kids start to kind of self-assess and then also assess each other, and if they’re finding the norms and the values.

The above quotation emphasizes how RJE needs to work in tandem with building a universal culture of expectations and values across the school. The SQRP ratings of Westshore and Sunshine high school (Refer to Table 4) suggest that culture and climate have been well established for success at both these schools, thereby making it easier to universalize relational practices. In addition, the Dynamic Center, in their mission of infusing RJE practices at Sunshine explicitly state that RJE needs to be understood in tandem with SEL and thus universalizing such relational practices was a priority for them at Sunshine.

Klein & Knight (2005) in their innovation implementation framework emphasize that financial resource availability is critical for a continuous and consistent use of an innovation by employees. Through this mechanism of universalizing relational practices and

apportioning scarce financial resources for the same, Westshore and Sunshine have been able to enlist staff buy-in. For example, Westshore's principal has used their school based budgeting towards hiring a full-time social worker who is also the appointed RJE coordinator at Westshore, while Sunshine's principal has hired the renowned Dynamic Center and appointed new staff to help infuse RJE.

As the mathematics teacher at Westshore said, the principal is being viewed as someone who puts money behind what she prioritizes despite the threat of under-enrolment that Westshore has been facing from CPS²⁷. Westshore's Dean, also a social worker by training, works in close consultation with the school social worker on matters of discipline. Many consider the dean and social worker "duo" very effective and a sound strategic decision. In praise of the principal's financial priorities, the mathematics teacher at Westshore states:

What has gone well? The fact that we even have the budget to hire a social worker²⁸. I don't know of any other high schools that have a full-time social worker on their staff. And that he has the connections to get students in from universities that are also studying social work. And they are involved with our adolescents, who has that? I don't know of any other school that has it. But the fact that we had the foresight to say, "hey we have this extra grant money, let's make this investment", because there are things outside of our control that, our students are dealing with.

²⁷ Westshore's under enrolment is intimately linked to the fact that the school is located on a gentrifying west side of the city, which mostly comprises of minority communities. The neighborhood has begun to see a growth of charter schools, which has drawn students away from Westshore.

²⁸ School social workers are usually appointed at schools based on CBO grant contracts. However at Westshore, the principal has moved the social workers contract into the regular school-funding bucket, thereby signifying the salience of the social worker at Westshore.

One of the barriers that Klein & Ralls (1995) highlight is that innovations can often be deemed as unreliable, containing design flaws thereby potentially frustrating its users. One of the mechanisms to counter such barriers was evidenced at Sunshine. With the assistance of the Dynamic Center, Sunshine's principal believed that adults at his school had to experience RJE first hand in order for them to believe in the potential of RJE. In Wadhwa's (2016) opinion, it is important for staff to witness or vicariously experience the power of circles to develop an open-mind about the new paradigm. Being a trained circle keeper, the principal would often have his staff participate in proactive, community building circles at the start of the school year in order for them to voice their concerns about the upcoming year. In his own words:

And so, within the first week of professional development, before the kids even come, we actually had teachers and staff members all over the building sitting in circles led by me, cause I'm a circle keeper. And so, we have all these circles in all of the different parts of the building. And there wasn't really any conflict. It was more circles about, like: so, what are your fears this year? You know, every teacher starts a new school year with some anxiety. So, what do you want to take from the past and bring to the future? What, are you worried about the future? And teachers are like small groups of 10-12 of them. I wanted them to feel what a circle felt like. And so, that was one of the first things that we did. And we did it through sort of action, not words. And then, we just started using it.

Klein & Knight (2005) propose that it is important for managerial support of an innovation; else target users can interpret it as a passing managerial fancy. Given the transitional phase of principal leadership at both Timber high school and Somerset Academy, universalizing and prioritizing relational practices has fallen short. At Timber, the turbulent environment with ever-changing leadership and staff turnover has come in the way of RJE as expressed by the Harmony Consortium's RJE coordinator. With the Dean being

the latest member to resign from his post, as aptly stated by Timber's Visual Arts teacher, "right now we're trying to find our identity a little bit" indicative of the chaos and mistrust that is pervasive at the school.

In the special educational instructor's opinion, principals need to build up systems and structures within complex school environments such as Timber, over and above being passionate about the cause for students. Only through such means would the RJE partnership bear fruit, else it will be reduced to becoming marginal within the school. With the new leadership in place at Timber, the special educator is hopeful that she will be able to universalize RJE practices given her promise and potential of being data driven and hailing from an urban educational background. She states:

Lots of principals have come and gone and have some levels of compassion- but compassion isn't sufficient, you need compassion with structure. It's a very tough environment. Some principals were more of a coach- more suited to charter schools and collegial levels. Now I would say it is more efficient. New principal and AP- they come from an urban education, they are data-driven and objective. The principal is accessible, observant, makes swift decisions, is practical- brings in appropriate understanding and leadership.

There has been a drastic change of principal leadership at Somerset Academy. The previous principal, despite having helped Somerset reach its IB status, was very heavy-handed in her ways of dealing with discipline and was not a supporter of RJE. The current principal is striving to, "flip the script" at Somerset as she is a strong supporter of RJE. The Cherry Center, which has been operational at the school since the very beginning is currently caught in the middle of this leadership transition and hence has not been able to function appropriately.

In her attempt to make RJE front and center, Somerset's principal has placed unrealistic expectations on her staff to practice RJE without providing them requisite knowledge, resources and support. Such an impositional process has resulted in poor staff buy in at Somerset. This is in line with Heath and Heath's (2010) study which states that staff resistance is often caused by a lack of clarity about expectations and direction. Such actions of Somerset's principal can be understood in light of Klein & Knight's innovation implementation framework, as they state that top-down innovations often cause skepticism amongst targeted users regarding the true merits of the innovation.

For example, Somerset's English teacher, an old white man, believed that the new principal blindly represents the broader changes happening at the district level, without taking a moment to explain how and why RJE is important and necessary for their school to follow. This is resonant with the idea that it is important for staff to not experience the implementation of restorative practices as an imposition, but rather as a willing investment (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). He states:

And again, to be fair to the administration, they've had to develop this, as all the schools in the system have had to develop this because this is new for everybody. So, there was one time, you know, they throw around terms ladder of consequences. So, you know, okay, call the home, this is gonna happen next, this is. What do you do with a kid who goes right from the step one to step seven? That is a thematic model or structure as a theorized model is absolutely useless, you know. So, you have to win the hearts and the minds by another way. So, we're back to peer jury, and that whole thing is you need a bunch of models. And now you're getting down to the idiosyncratic nature of each of their problems, which for some is the absence of parents at home, for some it's drug experimentation and early stages of drug use, or just bad role models at home. So, for teachers it's been incredibly frustrating because you've taken the traditional tools we have at our repertoire and, you know, said: you cannot use any of these types of exclusionary polices. We want them in the building, and you hear clichés and the professional literature about stopping the school the prison pipeline.

The above quotation means that Somerset's staff; especially the teaching staff owing to the district pressures of lowering OSS, cannot utilize exclusionary disciplinary sanctions within their building which has left them powerless. He believes that this change in district policy provides an unfair advantage to students over staff since approaches like the peer jury model are too lax and lenient. Inherent in his statement, one can also sense a racial bias that this white staff has towards minority students at Somerset, as he believes that such students are not going to succeed in life, with or without reforms such as RJE, owing to their negligent home backgrounds. Hence the mismatch of staff-student diversity as purported in the literature is also affecting the way RJE is getting implemented.

Blindly following district mandates without contextualizing and explicating the need for RJE reforms within schools has led to poor staff buy in at both Timber and Somerset. Since change is an emotional process, announcing change as if it was fait accompli and expecting people to oblige, as was the case at Somerset and Timber caused staff resistance to the ideals of universalizing RJE. In general, there exists greater mistrust between the administration and other personnel at Timber and Somerset compared to Westshore and Sunshine, often resulting in personnel at Timber and Somerset unwilling to let go of their punitive mindsets. This can be explained through the innovation implementation literature that points to the fact that organizational members often adhere to the past, oppose change and strive to maintain a status quo given their dissatisfaction with the innovation at hand (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000).

Additionally, with regards to race and class disproportionality, the current findings point to the fact that schools located on the Southside of the city (Timber) and Westside of the city (Westshore), which largely serve minority students are fraught with competing priorities. Such pressures were not felt at Somerset or Sunshine, schools located on the North

side of Chicago that have greater resources. On one hand, Timber and Westshore are striving to improve their student enrolment numbers since they face under-enrolment district pressures while at the same time because of the 2013-14 Common Core Standards; their academic indicators have not been up to the mark. Hence the RJE reform efforts at both these schools have a higher chance of failing compared to schools located on the North side- which further raises concerns about the role of RJE with regards to addressing issues of race within schools.

Communication

Message management and maintaining open lines of communication is integral for any change process to gain traction. As stated by Klein & Knight (2005, p.245), learning orientation refers to a “set of interrelated practices and beliefs that support and enable employee and organizational skill development, learning and growth”. This framing signified how it was imperative that school staff hone their skills and orient themselves to the larger school practices. Thus the communication theme comprises, firstly of the kinds of awareness building activities, utilization of the peace room, role redefinition, and the kinds of training on RJE being provided to the staff and students alike. Secondly, the theme incorporates the staff’s perception of RJE as being a firm, fair and consistent approach that is strong on accountability and support as touted in the literature (Blood, 2005).

Building relations before academics was the common messaging being communicated at Westshore and Sunshine high schools. In contrast, at Timber and Somerset, order precedes learning was considered most salient by several staff members. We can observe from Table 6 that Sunshine is faring the best on this theme followed by Westshore, Timber and Somerset.

At both Westshore and Sunshine, suspended curriculum at the start of the school year was the norm, wherein emphasis was laid on improving relations between students and staff and informing everyone about the various SEL resources at their school, such as the peace room. According to the Westshore's principal, it was important that their teachers mentor and build relationships with students in order to help diffuse and de-escalate conflict by using restorative practices. She states:

Yeah, so, we spend a lot of time building relationships with students, and it starts from day one-- it's called 'suspended curriculum' so, instead of jumping into academics right away we'll take a week to do team building classroom norms, getting to know your teacher, getting to know your pairs, techniques around like anger management conflict resolution how to work well in groups so, we put a lot of emphasis in the non-cognitive - non-academic skills up front and then thread that out throughout the school year. We also, each teacher in the building has a group of students that they mentor that's they are responsible for, which automatically builds this kind informal relationship with students that students are checking in with teachers during lunch time after school before school. We have clubs that are sponsored by teachers and staff. There is a lot of emphasis and intentional priority placed to building relationships with students

The peace room and its utility signify the worth of RJE within school buildings. As stated in the literature, the most significant costs of implementing RJE are training costs and appointing a full-time RJE coordinator to operate the peace room (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Several personnel praised Sunshine's RJE coordinator for operating a very successful peace room and her RJE services have also garnered a lot of positive momentum in the press. Sunshine's peace room is very accessible given its location amongst classrooms and the very space itself is very warm and welcoming. The security officer believes that Sunshine's peace room was a safe space for staff and students to utilize within the building and the RJE coordinator's ability to mediate conflict was commendable. She states:

I do believe the peace room works and it helps even if with the adults in the building. Sometimes we may have to go have a conversation in the peace room. It really works. It does because just say if we have a conflict, you and I. Okay. The peace room can really resolve a situation and at least they could hear all sides of the story. Opposed to us finding it out. We can talk it out. If all else fails, you know, some kids just want to fight to get it off their chest because I saw them that's all they know how. But if they go to the peace room, they're saying something different. Like being like mature. To be able to talk out the problems or the situation. You know, to resolve it that way than what they were used to.

Contrarily, personnel at Somerset do not know where the peace room is located within their building and the peace room itself appeared to be infrequented and unwelcoming. This is also a result of the fact that the Cherry Center's RJE coordinator presently only operates a few hours a week and while speaking to her she also mentioned that the peace room's location was being changed by the administration- further reflective of its lack of need within Somerset. The RJE coordinator states:

There's a lot of fear with the open door policy with students "abusing" that power. So, students just like wanting to skip class. I don't honestly think that that's a huge issue. We've not seen that really. Typically when a student wants to come in here, its cause they're feeling some type away, they need that space, they need that support. Who are we to say you know you don't need that support right now, get back to class. ... It's also very interesting to know that the people who stop by are the people that are closest to this room. Like, the people in this hallway.

The above statement speaks to the negative perception that staff have with regards to the peace room, as they believe that students use the peace room as an excuse to escape their academic classroom endeavors. These aspects also point to the fact that personnel at Somerset hone implicit biases towards students who use the peace room since they pointed to the fact that these were the same set of troublemakers in the building. Hence one can sense

the exasperation in the RJE coordinator's voice who states that such students have already been assigned negative labels in lieu of the genuine support that they are seeking from the peace room.

Across all schools, teachers pointed to some practical impediments they faced whilst striving to receive RJE training. District level trainings on RJE were considered redundant and ineffective, which further ate away from their classroom prep time. Finding personnel substitutes to teach the syllabus while they attended trainings was an arduous task. On many occasions teachers were unhappy with the timing or the inconvenience of RJE training locations further exacerbating their unsavory notions towards RJE training. For example, the Mathematics teacher at Timber states:

We've had some trainings, I wouldn't say that I've been trained. I've tried to work within the system, and I'm a friend of Ms. <name of English teacher>. I've tried my best to work with <name of RJE coordinator> and learn as much as I could. We did have a professional development. We have had a few of those that were during a day when students aren't here, and it was required attendance. So, it was not always voluntary. Necessary, but not sure there are trainings have been sufficient by any means. Just sort of getting an idea of what restorative justice is.

The teacher's statement reflects on the fact that the trainings lacked depth of information, especially with regards to understanding their role in conducting RJE practices. What is interesting to note is that, it seems like the onus to get trained in RJE especially for teachers, meant that they had to seek out this training on their own time and accord which calls to question why internal training efforts were falling short? Beyond training, teachers also expressed that large classroom sizes were not conducive to conduct peace circles- thereby touching upon some practical impediments that teachers often faced.

In an attempt to tide over some of the concerns surrounding training on RJE, schools are striving to improve their internal training capacities. For instance, inspired by the Oakland school districts efforts²⁹ on training for Tier 1 level intervention (Part of the MTSS framework, refer to Figure 5), Westshore's principal has engaged an RP Coach from the central office to assist the Dean and the social worker with enhancing their teacher's internal training skills. The principal's statement reflects on the fact that she stays abreast of the latest developments in the field of RJE and knows what direction her school ought to strive towards. As Westshore's principal states:

I have gone to several professional developments both informal and formal and so for example just recently I went to 'Oakland Unified' school district to look at their systems around RJ practices, they're huge on the peace circle, which we actually just started doing here. We were doing it before but now it was mainly just sponsored by the Dean's office and the Social work office. Now we're scaling it school wide we want teachers to be trained in doing it. So we just started that work here 'cause that's what they're doing in Oakland where the teachers are running the peace circles in their classroom it's tier one interventions And that's where I wanna go with this

The innovation implementation literature speaks to how status hierarchies often get disrupted within organizations, as innovations often require role redefinition, which could often result into power struggles amongst staff (Klein & Sorra, 1996). With RJE coming into the building, I sought to gauge whether the traditional, dominant role of the Deans who are in charge of discipline has changed. Findings indicate that such roles were redefined more so within Westshore and Sunshine compared to Timber and Somerset. For instance, at

²⁹ The Oakland School District is touted as one of the most pioneering districts for implementing RJE across the U.S based on review of related literature and other sources of personal communication

Westshore, matters of discipline are handled by the dynamic dean and social worker “duo” while at Sunshine, personnel are aware that such matters fall into the hands of the “trio”, i.e., the Dean, the RJE coordinator and the Assistant Principal. At Timber, the Dean is seen as the major point person for handling matters of discipline and usually refers cases to the RJE coordinator in the peace room. This was also the case at Somerset wherein the Dean’s traditional role has been retained. However that is not to state that neither of these Deans, i.e., from Timber and Somerset do not believe in RJE but because they are still the single point person, employees across the board view RJE as a supplement to the Dean’s efforts.

Beyond training and awareness generation, the successful implementation of RJE rested on whether the staff perceived RJE as being firm, fair and consistent for everyone in the building. The literature points to how change that is being brought into schools must not be considered too radical or drastic, as it can often result in chaos and confusion. The previous leader at Somerset did not believe in RJE and ran a “tight ship” by being intolerant of student misbehavior. Given the current principal’s pro RJE student centered stance, personnel felt that students at Somerset were getting away with murder under this new administration. Somerset’s social worker believes the equilibrium that the previous principal had maintained, especially with regards to bringing in order before learning has given way to chaos and confusion under the new principal regime. Thus the idea of RJE as being firm and fair gets lost in the process as the social worker says:

And if we know anything about change, social workers know a lot about change. We know about the theoretical model of change. So it’s been rough. It’s been rough because you know I also was thinking about like systems theory is like when one part of it changes, the other parts like try to remain the homeostasis of it you know? So we’ve been struggling with that. But we’ve struggling with you know like who is in charge at

this school? Because we had a very strong leader before like she was like let go. And so the kids are kind of what I'm seeing is the kids are trying to take her role.

Announcing change does not equate to sound implementation (Zigarmi et al., 2006). According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013), enthusiastic leaders often announce change, without exposing staff to the principles and practice or conduct a one-day session and expect staff to implement RJE without additional support or dialogue. This was evidenced at Timber and Somerset, wherein neither did their principals "walk the talk" nor did they ensure consistency of RJE protocols that they expected their staff to implement. For instance, the Mathematics teacher at Timber who is also a CTU delegate states that principals need to be more cognizant of the kinds of examples and precedents they are setting for students. This was because inconsistencies were rampant which created further rifts between the staff and the administration. He states:

There needs to be consistency. We all as adults in the building need to work as a team. If we're not all on the same page, then that becomes a problem... So, how that plays out though is standing in front of the class, teaching, a student pulls out their cell phone. If the student doesn't hear from the principal or see the principal reacts, the principal just ignores that. Again, it goes back to developmental issues with students of that age. They see that as the principal is giving them permission. ...They are not enforcing rules they want me to enforce. So then the kids are saying: well, I just walked by the principal and she didn't care. It makes your job a lot harder unnecessarily. So, that drives wedges.

On the flipside, especially at Sunshine- the principal's progressive, visionary, student centered notions surrounding RJE were infectious. His accessible nature and the fact that he "walks the talk" made him an ally for both his students and staff alike. It was essential to communicate to the rest of the staff that RJE procedural fairness and protocol consistency was being followed, and the principal more than anyone else in the building has to set the

right example. For instance, whilst I was interviewing the principal at Sunshine, we were interrupted by some commotion heard through his walkie-talkie. He excused himself from the interview and on returning he states:

To be quite honest, where I went it, it was two adults. They were fighting. A teacher texting me: hey, you might wanna come. And I said: I'm coming down. And we did a quick mediation. I have probably done more adult mediations this year than I've done kid mediations. So, I believe into the core that the adults in the building go to the peace room. I mean, I heard... A student told me that a teacher was talking about her other teacher. And I told <name of the peace room coordinator> here, like, you needed my contact, these two teachers are talking about each other, and the students are becoming a conduit with this conflict. And, they opened the peace room this morning. I mean, this is the core of who I am.

The above quotation signals that staff conflict is acknowledged and acted on with a restorative approach, with all adults having a clear understanding of the need to model what we want from young people at Sunshine. This is in line with the literature, which states that it is important for personnel to become role models and teach students how the RJE process works (Tew, 2007; Lahey, 2013). This is an example of being consistent and uniform about following the RJE norm.

However, across all schools, personnel complained about the lack of communication regarding closing feedback loops about student referrals made through the online logger system, Verify. This was resonated by the arts teacher at Westshore, who states that the administration needs to keep their teachers informed at all times about their student's whereabouts especially after the student was referred by them to the discipline office. For instance the Arts Teacher said:

The one thing I wish <Dean name> had done that she didn't and I'm sure it was an oversight, is she didn't tell me that this young lady was in the office with her. So I

thought oh, she's cutting my class now you know. I thought maybe like, like things had gotten worse. But you know, just to, you know and I'm sure it's an oversight. But communication is always important.

The Art Teachers statement above also implies that administrative staff, especially Deans seem to be over-worked. Hence updating their school personnel about specific student cases was a challenge.

Interestingly, across the board the administrators mentioned that RJE training is "encouraged but not mandated", which begs the question as to why communicating the need for RJE at their schools, is not being met with requisite knowledge on how to conduct RJE. Findings highlight how critical message management and communication is for the staff to feel supported and motivated to continue to implement RJE. Principals ought to be aware of the overt and covert signals that they are sending out to the staff and students, especially on matters of matching their expectations with support and ensuring protocol consistency. Despite efforts being made, training and appropriate communication on RJE needs improvement. Thus the effective packaging of implementation policies and practices as stated in the innovation implementation literature, in terms of the quality and quantity of training and the provision of technical assistance (Klein & Ralls, 1995) is falling short at all schools.

Culture

As the innovation implementation framework emphasizes that an innovation will be effective if an appetite or an appropriate organizational climate has been built for the innovation to as to have a shared perception of its significance (Klein & Knight, 2005). The level of partner immersion, i.e., the CBOs understanding of the pulse and the direction of the

school as well as the overall morale of the staff in terms their receptivity to innovations such as RJE comprise of the culture theme. As one can observe from table 6, the level of CBO-partner immersion was the highest at Sunshine followed by Timber, and was non-existent at Westshore and Somerset. On the other hand, staff morale is the highest at Westshore, followed by Sunshine and the others.

Several personnel at Timber expressed contentment with the RJE coordinator from the Harmony Consortium, as she was described as being “fabulous” and is considered “huge in our building”. Despite the RJE coordinator’s popularity at Timber, she has not been able to make much progress due to a lack of stable leadership. Other staff at Timber mirrored this state of learned helplessness owing to the instability within their school. For instance, whilst interviewing the special educational instructor, she had an emotional moment and broke down, which was very telling of the institutional trauma and low staff morale that exists at Timber.

The teaching staff felt insignificant and disempowered at Timber, since they felt that the administration in the name of being “student-centered” in their approach, disparately took the student’s word over theirs. The social studies teacher despairingly spoke about how he felt unsupported and was often accused of being a racist since he is a white male teaching predominantly African-American students. He felt that Timber’s administration unflinching believed the students over their staff and as a consequence felt unsupported at his school:

I don’t feel, supported. I just don’t feel supported by the system to do what it is that I want to. To get expectations, to have kids wanting to be here. As a white male, I feel insignificant that I can’t do, strategies that I’ve seen other people do. Whether I agree with them or not are certainly things that I could not do. So, I just, I feel very ineffective. And the paper pusher. And, I just feel that I have to be tolerant to the point of acceptance. I have to accept that. And because of that I feel. You know, students will

accuse me of being racist because you need to be on time, you need to get your work, and you need to have a notebook. I know that it's an easy thing for them to say. That's a label that they may not even understand. I feel racist in pushing these kids along.... I think my students have more access to my principal. And I think about, if I'm a student and I don't like what's going on in the class, and I know I can just walk out of here, call you a blankety blank, walk down to the office, kind of even maybe make up a lie, or exaggerate something.

Like the Harmony Consortium, the Dynamic Center is also considered an asset at Sunshine with a critical difference- receiving unflinching support from the administration. Dynamic Center's RJE coordinator appears to be well immersed and in sync with the broader changes being brought into Sunshine. On my numerous trips I observed her mingling with multiple staff members at the school. At the culture and climate meeting, I noticed that the RJE coordinator's viewpoints were considered valuable, reflective of her significance at Sunshine. The assistant principal at Sunshine attributes a lot of the school's turnaround success to the Dynamic Center's RJE reform efforts, as he proudly states:

We're super fortunate that we're choosing us as a school, we're choosing to use discretionary funds for the Dynamic Center. And we have a dedicated person who has almost single-handedly changed the culture of the school. You know, not all schools make a decision to do that, not all schools can make a decision

However, such disproportionate praise to the Dynamic Center has led to feelings of inadequacy and a mediocre morale amongst some staff at Sunshine. As stated previously, there was a point in time when the Cherry Center used to implement RJE at Sunshine but had "fizzled" out. According to the social worker, this time around undue credit is being granted to the Dynamic Center for turning the school around without acknowledging other personnel's efforts and contribution. This has caused feeling of being undervalued and underappreciated at Sunshine as he states:

The current incarnation is being effective. It has the support of the administration. Any program in order to succeed must have the support of the administration. And so, right now anything that happens, it's: 'Let's get a peace circle, let's get <name of RJE coordinator>.' And she is wonderful. I don't mean that she's not. And she is very dedicated, but I think that disproportionate sense of the change has been attributed to that as opposed to really appreciate the whole spectrum.

Hence the above quotation points to the fact that change needs to be a lot more democratic and involve many more actors to partake in the reform- else feels of inadequacy and insecurity become rampant. In contrast, the overall staff morale at Westshore was upbeat and positive, as the staff felt well supported by the administration and the school has built a strong culture of collaboration and camaraderie. For instance, Westshore's chief engineer states, " I love it. I think it's a good atmosphere, there's a great team".

Nonetheless, the external neighborhood gentrification forces intimately tied to issues of race-relations are beginning to affect the staff morale within Westshore. The spurt of charter schools in the gentrifying west side neighborhood is one of the reasons why student enrolment is low at Westshore. Students with better academic records are choosing to attend charters over a neighborhood school like Westshore. The administration is now being compelled to enroll students outside the neighborhood boundaries, which also affects the racial makeup of students and staff within the building. For instance, Westshore's security officer, a former Westshore student said:

That should do a lot with the, not only the climate and culture in the building. But the climate and the culture around the building. Like the neighborhood has changed. Dramatically. Almost drastically. Sure. There's been a lot of gentrification. In the neighborhood. So a lot of the families have been either forced to move out. Or had no choice but to move out. So the climate and culture of the neighborhood dictates pretty much who goes to the school. Because in the building, there's one thing about Westshore, a lot of people don't know about this, this is a generational high school. But

the gentrification that happens in the area. These kids are being bussed in from five, six, seven miles away

Westshore is handling matters of internal climate and culture on their own through various RJE practices, without the assistance of an agency. As stated previously, the current administration decided to forgo its partnership with the Blossom Center that ran a parent-run peace center at Westshore for three main reasons. Firstly, the CBO did not align with the school's vision and mission. Secondly, the Blossom Center compared to other community partnerships in the building was not adding value to Westshore's needs. Lastly, the Blossom Center appeared to be disconnected from the everyday activities and the pulse of the school, as most personnel were unaware of its existence in the building. The principal stated that her internal staff, specifically her social worker and dean "duo" who by virtue of being well trained in RJE are doing a better job of implementing RJE compared to the CBO. She states:

The Blossom Center used to be a partner. What I do regularly is evaluate the effectiveness of the partnerships that I do have and it needs to all be aligned to the vision that I have of where this school needs to go and the partnerships that are in line with that, remain and the partnerships that don't need to be removed right its, futile otherwise. So in theory the work that the Blossom Center stands for I absolutely full heartedly believe in, however I have two trained and certified people full time on my staff who can do that exact work and not only can they do that exact work, but have more insight into the students that they're serving cause they're here every day all day. So the, the first reason for removal was redundancy. The second reason for removal was in my assessment of them I just did not think they were effective. There were just certain things that were getting in the way of progress than fostering progress.

Somerset appears to be moving in the direction of Westshore wherein the once prominent Cherry Center is being neglected presently at Somerset. The internal personnel change within the Cherry Center has made it harder for them to reestablish their operations at

Somerset. Somerset's current principal expressed her discontent with the center since she felt that they did not understand the pulse of the school, their RJE practices were viewed as being disorganized and delimiting and students were seen to take advantage of the peace room. As Somerset's principal states:

No, but I think that's what the Cherry Center were supposed to be the coach. She was our restorative justice coach. The person we have now is our coach. But when you're only here one day a week, nine to two, you don't really get a good feel of the school, you don't understand the systems, you don't know kids, you don't know. It's just not really working. I think she's done one peace circle. No, she's done two. Both times it was pretty much about the same group of girls. And they sought her out. And they, the second time around, I knew for the fact they did it as a way to like get out of class. So, that's kind of been, it's been frustrating.

Additionally, the morale at Somerset is low since the staff feel overburdened, their services are stretched thin and many had negative encounters with RJE in the past. For instance, the mathematics teacher finds the RJE process intrusive, ineffective and unpopular at Somerset. In her own words:

I have a personal story about restorative justice. So therefore I didn't receive it very well. I had a student who I was having a really like, tough time with and like something happened in the class that we ended out in the hallway. I think I had an inclusion teacher in the room. We ended up in the hallway and our conversation escalated. And I mean that's something like teachers' are humans. Sometimes we don't react exactly as we should in a situation. So it escalated. And then all of a sudden, someone was in my face from restorative justice being like we'd like to do restorative justice on this issue, like right now and I'm like, I'm trying to get this person back in the room to teach this person. This is not like the time or the place, to interrupt me. So I think, that sometimes I think that the idea behind it is great. I think sometimes the tactics are less effective. I honestly though don't other than teachers who work with restorative justice and are therefore supporters of it I don't really know what the general opinion of it is. It doesn't, to me feel like it gets talked about that often.

In addition, very similar to Timber, the teachers at Somerset feel fatigued and frustrated. They feel that their efforts, be it teaching, or conducting RJE or catering to student's needs are perpetually falling short in the eyes of the administration. For instance Somerset's English teacher states that a disproportionate burden of responsibility is being placed on teachers shoulders- further contributing to poor staff morale at Somerset. He states:

A lot of what happens is, what I don't like about is that the burden is placed on the teacher. The students do nothing wrong and onus for everything. So, you know, it's like your classroom is not interesting enough, you're not relevant enough. And you'll see in the professional literature statements like: you should make culturally responsive curriculum. Again, where in the world are, I don't even know what that phrase means. So, engaging curriculum starts to become "edutainment". It's not that there's any actual rigor to it, but the purpose is merely to entertain them because that's what will make them interested. And if that's what makes them interested, then they won't misbehave. So again, the default is to the teacher because the curriculum isn't interesting. Culturally relevant curriculum means that they get everything catered to them. So, mostly what we've talked about is that in the absence of the true traditional exclusionary measures like suspension and expulsion, all we're doing is really creating a log of behaviors, a data stream where. All we're doing is, calling homes, where from the kids' point of view it looks like, basically, you have to murder somebody or do something criminal or get arrested before any type of negative consequence is going to happen to you. From the teacher's point of view it's created a lot of frustration.

A failure to respect and understand the culture in which one is seeking to implement an innovation (Zigarmi et al., 2006) and staff feeling resigned to a culture of disrespect (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013) was more evident at Timber and Somerset. Thorsborne (2011) states that if schools intend to implement restorative policy and protocols, they must pay close attention to the quality of staff relationships. In general, as observed at Westshore and Sunshine, there is a recognition and commitment to the notion, that positive, robust

relationships lie at the heart of learning and pedagogical practice, of wellbeing and a sense of belonging and connectedness; and all decisions, structures, policies and procedures reflect this understanding.

The interconnections between the three major themes of visionary leadership, culture and communication have been diagrammatically represented through the social capital/social discipline window (adapted from Watchel, 1999). According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013, p.31), “working restoratively is a way of being and doing that is both firm in terms of explicit standards of behavior (boundaries and pressure) and fair in terms of supporting (nurturing) children, adolescents and adults to change their behavior and develop pro-social thinking and skill sets”. Each of the quadrants represents a value placed on compliance (vertical axis) on the one hand, and the relationship (horizontal axis) on the other. I will specify how schools have been placed into each quadrant as represented in Figure 9, followed by a brief explanation.

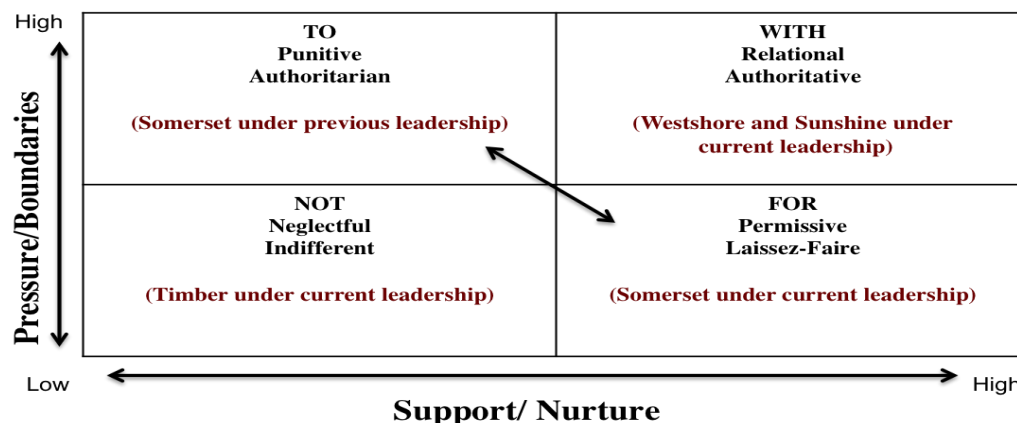


Figure 9: Social capital/social discipline window reflective of study findings

Looking at Figure 9, the upper left-hand quadrant represents high pressure with low support, wherein the authoritarian approach demands compliance at all costs and punishes non-compliance (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). This was more pronounced at Somerset during

the previous leadership's regime. Given that Somerset is presently undergoing a drastic change in leadership, the social capital approach has moved from the upper left quadrant to the diagonally opposite quadrant, which represents high support and low pressure. The present permissive structure at Somerset has resulted in over-protection, excusing, rescuing or doing things for the child, rather than helping them to do it themselves. Timber High School appears to be operating in the lower left quadrant, which represents low pressure and low support characterized as being neglectful. According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013), teachers especially get to this phase when they feel burnt out, face professional or personal struggles and are unable to meet the needs of their class. These aspects very much resonated by teachers at Timber.

The quadrant, where the restorative philosophy of problem solving works best, is distinguished by high pressure around expectations and standards in a climate of high support and nurture (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). To a large extent, personnel at Westshore and Sunshine are experiencing these aspects. At both Westshore and Sunshine, I could observe that the language being used by management and staff about their work, their clients (students and parents) and each other, was a move away from blaming, stigmatizing and excusing to one that is more relational, which in turn influences practice (Morrison et al., 2006).

Discussion & Conclusion

Implementation of an innovation such as RJE, as evidenced in the findings reflect the complexities involved in change management (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Overall the findings showcase that in order for schools to bring about a skilled, committed and consistent use of an innovation such as RJE (Klein & Sorra, 1996), schools need to keep three critical

factors in mind. The leadership efforts, be it joint leadership between the CBO and the principal or only the principals, their actions need to meet their vision in order to coalesce allies and universalize relational practices like RJE. Communication about RJE needs to be frequent, effective and engaging in order to legitimize the worth and the need of RJE at schools. Finally, partnerships need to understand how best to engender a positive, relational culture at their school to boost staff morale and improve RJE implementation efforts.

We observed the roles CBOs played as institutional entrepreneurs to catalyze reform at the both the policy and the local school level during the RJE adoption phase. Given this chapter's focus on how local schools successful strive to implement RJE, my findings point to how the influence of CBOS, i.e., the erstwhile institutional entrepreneurs diminishes with regards to catalyzing RJE implementation processes within schools. As shown in this study, principals or the local school leaders become critical for the RJE change process at their schools. Principals were seen as the ultimate decision makers with respect to RJE implementation efforts, with or without the assistance of a CBO.

Agency reputation and effectiveness, their level of embeddedness within schools, personnel changes within the agency and whether they were cost-efficient were often the determining factors for their maintenance. These elements also speak to the precarity of partnership contexts within the field of RJE reform. It thus appears that the former institutional entrepreneurial stance that CBOs took on in the past to influence adoption out of their own agency, is severely stunted by largely two forces- the principal's unrelenting support as well as the state of urban flux at schools. For instance, at both Westshore and Somerset, principals are striving to motivate their staff to build internal RJE capacity without relying on the CBO to spearhead change. At Timber, one can observe that the CBO is

assisting the school implement RJE, however their efforts have often been jeopardized owing to the state of flux and chaos within the school.

In fact, one could extend the institutional entrepreneurship perspective to state that principals such as the case at Westshore could serve as the newfound institutional entrepreneur to carry on the legacy of the CBO, i.e., in this case the Blossom Center. Even though the framework highlights how institutional entrepreneurs often exist outside a particular institutional field, the overriding argument is that certain principals expend their scarce and critical resources (Fligstein, 1997; Lawrence et al., 2005) towards enlisting allies. For example, Westshore's principal has expending her discursive strategy through the creation of an internal handbook, "The Westshore Way" for her staff to implement RJE. In fact, such a handbook predates the district handbook regarding disciplinary protocol. Hence Westshore's principal's legitimacy has risen in the eyes of her staff since her entrepreneurial actions are congruent with the values and the expectations of the larger environment, i.e., the district policy (Durand & McGuire, 2005; Rao, Monin and Durand, 2005). In many ways, the principal has demonstrated to her staff that RJE is a part of the overall school's mission and vision and she is focused on designing sustainable institutional arrangements towards making RJE the norm at her school despite the fact that she is operating in an environment of depleting resources (Leca, Battilana, & Boxenbaum, 2008).

Only the Dynamic Center, which operates within Sunshine, has been able to effectively bring about RJE implementation within the school and in multiple ways have been the epicenter of reform and change at Sunshine, thereby retaining their institutional entrepreneurial title. However it is important to note that the Dynamic Center was brought into Sunshine based on the principal's efforts to reach out to them instead of the other way around- which points to how successful RJE implementation at Sunshine is largely

attributable to agency's reputation in the field, their level of immersion within the school to effect change, and most importantly them receiving unrelenting support received from the administration. At the same time, as the data points out, it is imperative that such partnership contexts should not receive disproportionate praise for spearheading change and reform within schools because it can lead to lowering other staff morale as they feel excluded from the change process. The findings point to the fact that partnership contexts can be at the helm of change efforts within the school but must do so by being more inclusive of other school members in order to gain better staff buy in and improved implementation.

On applying Matland's (1995) policy implementation framing in light of the RJE implementation findings I observe that policy implementation is moving from an experimental state, as was the case during the policy adoption phase towards political implementation. CBOs who posed as street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1978) were hoping that with their guidance and recommendations, the district would take on administrative policy implementation, which is characterized by low levels of conflict and ambiguity. Akin to a well-oiled machine, in this type of implementation, the outcomes or success of the policy is directly related to providing enough resources. However given the insufficient resources that the CPS central district is fraught with, RJE policy implementation has moved away from the desired administrative implementation towards a more coercive, top-down approach- political implementation.

This type of political implementation according to Matland's (1995) framework is characterized as having high conflict and low ambiguity wherein powerful policy actors usually decide the outcomes. This implementation process consists of securing the compliance of actors whose resources are vital to policy success and ensuring that opponents of the policy do not thwart the process. Policy actors often resort to securing the cooperation

of their local level actors either through coercive, i.e., having sufficient power to force one's will on the other participants or remunerative, i.e., having sufficient resources to be able to bargain an agreement on means. In the light of the study's findings, we can observe that the central district is presently mandating the utility of RJE across all schools in their jurisdiction, largely motivated by the fact that federal policies expect school districts to lower their OSS numbers. However the district is adopting coercive mechanisms to gain compliance from schools, especially those schools like Timber who are reliant on CPS for resources in general. Thus the principal at Timber expects the same compliance from her staff and that is being met with resistance, since the staff is aware that the principal is blindly adhering to the district mandate. Westshore is also facing similar pressures from the district with regards to resources, however the principal is not blindly adopting the district's mandate as she is aware that in doing so her staff will resist her ideals surrounding RJE- thus she has focused her efforts at the local school level to successfully implement RJE.

Somerset, the school with the highest academic indicators and a school that is plush with resources, interestingly does not have the same resource dependency issues compared to poorer resourced schools like Timber and Westshore. Yet, the principal at Somerset is being met with resistance from her staff as she is also seen to blindly mimic the policy changes without contextualizing RJE at her school. My interpretation is that the principal at Somerset believes in the district policy changes and seeks to infuse those changes at her school, and more importantly is striving to flip the past punitive script owing to the punitive administrator, which in many ways has lowered the reputation of Somerset Academy. While Somerset's principal's heart is in the right place, she needs to be more aware of the fact that change reform cannot be too radical, as that often leads to fear and resistance amongst

employees- further discourages potential allies (Marguire & Hardy, 2006; Seo & Creed, 2002).

Hence one can observe as Thorsborne and Blood (2013) state that change is as much as it is about winning the hearts and minds of people as it is about the plan at hand. At the same time, issues of race disproportionality continue to surface at the RJE implementation phase- wherein the findings highlight how schools that mostly cater to minority, marginalized communities are facing greater implementation barriers compared to schools that receive better resources. This is very much in line with Payne's (2008) research, which speaks to the known variance in the amount of resources that are allocated to schools across different geographies as it intersects with race and class. Partners and more importantly principals need to be more cognizant of the role that race and class plays with respect to RJE dole out at their schools. Because in many ways RJE reform began as an alternative to punitive discipline that disproportionately affects minority communities and in many ways RJE should strive to iron out such imbalances and be an approach that is firm and fair to everyone.

CHAPTER 8

DIFFUSION & INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS

Successful implementation ought to be well embedded so that institutionalization or integration becomes the norm for RJE. The literature points to how RJE's sustainability is intimately linked to RJE being understood as an overarching philosophy, i.e., a framework compared to it being another behavioral management program or tool in the hands of school personnel (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). In light of that approach towards RJE, the current chapter draws on Rogers (2003) diffusion of innovation, Matland's (1995) policy implementation and the institutional entrepreneurial frameworks and seeks to examine how and to what degree RJE is getting diffused and integrated across public schools.





















Using Roger's (2003) framing of the five critical attributes for an innovation's successful diffusion process, this study compares and contrasts how RJE's perceived attributes relate to its diffusion within schools, especially with regards to RJE being superior than punitive sanctions and other similar SEL initiatives, which are rampant within CPS. Next, I classify schools based on whether RJE is being understood in relation to SEL, i.e., in line with the current understanding of RJE compared to schools that are integrating RJE as a part of discipline, wherein RJE is only viewed as a tool or supplement for punitive sanctions. Based on RJE's integration prospects across the schools, I focus on whether RJE has been successful in redefining the meaning of conflict and justice within schools especially with regards to addressing racial disproportionality and being more student centered than the dominant, retributive approach. Finally, drawing on the various theoretical frameworks I delve into a discussion and conclusion about whether RJE has moved away from the margins into the mainstream.

Diffusion: Perceived attributes of the Restorative Justice innovation

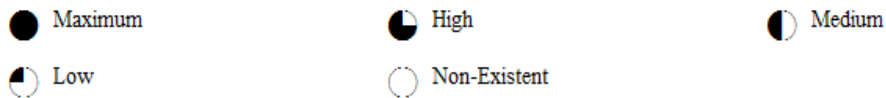
Diffusion refers to the rate of adoption of an innovation or the uptake of the innovation by members of an organization (Rogers, 2003). Rogers (2003) explains that innovations create uncertainty and owing to the uncomfortable state it causes, people seek out information about the new idea and its capacity to solve problems, from their peers. This framework provides an understanding of whether there is a buzz or excitement surrounding RJE amongst the school staff across schools.

As stated previously in the theoretical section, the five perceived attributes of an innovation include, 1) Relative advantage in terms of understanding whether RJE is different from other SEL initiatives at play in schools and works better than the current exclusionary punitive sanctions, 2) Compatibility of RJE with existing values and practices at schools, 3) Simplicity in terms of RJE's ease of use, 4) Triability in terms of the level of experimentation and re-invention of RJE, and 5) Observability in terms of observing the benefits of instating RJE at schools. Table 7 using the Harvey Balls diagrammatic representation compares and contrasts the degree of prevalence of these five attributes across the four school cases. I will walk you through each of the five attributes of the RJE innovation and emphasize how they have been represented within and across school contexts.

Table 7: School comparison of the perceived attributes of the RJE innovation

	Relative Advantage	Compatibility	Simplicity	Triability	Observable Results
Westshore					
Timber					
Sunshine					
Somerset					

Degree of Prevalance (Harveyballs indicate the relative degree to which the characteristic is met by the respective schools)



- (1) **Relative Advantage:** School discipline through the RJE lens shifts the focus from exclusionary discipline to restitution and repair of harm and relationships (Smith, Schneider, Smith & Ananiadou, 2004). Since RJE and other non-exclusionary disciplinary practices are striving to bring about fundamental changes within schools; personnel need answers to questions like- What is the change? Why is it needed? What is wrong with the way things are now? How do we know this works? What's in it for me? (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013).

As one can observe from Table 7, Westshore and Sunshine have more of a relative advantage compared to Timber and Somerset, with regards to RJE providing an alternative to exclusionary discipline as well as being able to be distinguishable from other SEL initiatives.

Using exclusionary disciplinary practices within Westshore and Sunshine was not viewed as a viable solution to handle matters of student misconduct. The norm at

both schools is that OSS is used as the last resort only when a majority of the school's safety is compromised. However even if a student is granted an OSS, RJE is utilized for the student's re-entry to the schools. For instance, Westshore's principal states believes that rendering OSS to her students would send out contradictory signals to her staff and students, given her impetus on learning and relationship building. Her premise is that if a student feels connected to their school, then they are less likely to act out and be given a suspension. She states:

As far as discipline is concerned I think of out of school suspension as the last resort. And that is primarily because it doesn't solve the problem ok because now they're gonna, they're—if, if I suspend them because they were smoking marijuana at school, well now I just made, made it that much easier for them to not come to school and hang around in the streets and smoke out and rob the neighborhood store. So that's one reason. So it's for their own safety, safety for the community but for the primary reason is when they are not in school they are not learning--there is this direct correlation between number of days absent and GPA if suspensions-- suspensions are forced absences and if I can't talk about-- I can't tell the kids repeatedly that I want, want them to be in school and they need to be in school and then be the reason why they are not in school. So that's my take on suspensions. But overall discipline in general a less punitive approach--and more of an understanding approach---works better that's why we put so much emphasis on building relationship because, when you do have strong relationships with students they're less likely to disappoint you.

In a similar manner, RJE appears to be the default practice at Sunshine as echoed by the world languages teacher who states:

Well, I saw that, I saw that instead of suspending students or giving them in-school suspension, they would send them to the Peace Room.

In contrast, at Timber and Somerset even though the administration felt that OSS should be used as the last resort, several others felt that that removing punitive

sanctions was not the solution. Staff members were unable to understand the advantages of RJE vis a vis punitive sanctions as stated by the social studies teacher at Timber:

I don't know. And I'm maybe the one who's not on board with it. Just because I got, I don't want to make her life any more difficult than it is, and, you know. Maybe there's no fear of the 3 strikes and you're out. Like, okay, so, this obviously isn't working for you. Restorative Justice works. It's not working for you. Cause if you keep going back in there, then something doesn't work. If I kept going in with the same kid over time.

His statement reflects on the fact that punitive sanctions yielded greater results compared to RJE, especially since the peace room has become a revolving door for students with repeat offenses. Beyond punitive sanctions, it was important that RJE stood out from other SEL initiatives for it to be considered advantageous. The common SEL initiatives that were in operation across schools were Think First, an anger management program, CHAMPS and Boystown, classroom management approaches and other, "carrot and stick" approaches as Wadhwa (2016) calls them.

As stated in the literature, RJE is deemed as both a practice and philosophy but not another behavioral management program. However personnel at Timber and Somerset failed to differentiate RJE for other similar, "carrot and stick approaches" as resonated by Timber's mathematics teacher:

In my opinion, in order for Restorative Justice to work well, I don't like to use this analogy; there are a lot of carrot and stick things that happen. There needs to be an understanding for students that if you don't go down this road with Restorative Justice and take it seriously and really try to work through it. Then there's this other path that we don't wanna use, that we're gonna use. And there needs to be this understanding that there's always a consequence. And a consequence may not be something you like. And it has to be out there. And I think CPS is just trying to make their data look better. They

can reduce suspensions with this without ever actually doing anything positive. Simple advise, telling principals and teachers: don't suspend anybody, use this Restorative Justice model. But if it's not done well, it's meaningless. It's just...It doesn't have the kind of outcome we need. It doesn't help the school culture if it's not done right. In fact, it can actually make the school culture worse if students figure out how to game the system. You get have something get even worse. And that's been the case in this building.

One can interpret the above quotation in light of the fact that Timber is blindly following the changes in the policy to reduce suspensions, given school data is being scrutinized by the district. At the same time, RJE was deemed to be no different from other SEL initiatives, which are often used as a supplement to punitive sanctions. Thereby RJE is being understood as just another program coming down the CPS pipeline.

This was not the sentiment at Westshore and Sunshine. RJE at these schools was touted as an overarching philosophy compared to other PBIS models that were being pedaled at schools for profiteering purposes. The principal at Westshore was aware that new administrators often bring on such models but do so without lasting success. RJE was different, as she states:

So, there's always these little initiatives, not just in Climate and Culture, but that's just how the education business, and probably a lot of other businesses function. There's a new administration, new administrative come into play, and then that administration goes away and those initiatives fall by the wayside, and the new administration brings in some new things. I think what's, what works is to kind of buffer all of that as much as possible at the school level. And that's what I try to do. I am not gonna just say: yes, I'm gonna do this because it's new and shiny and, you know, like Central Office is pedaling it. I decide what the need of my school is based on my context. So, we actually don't do PBIS, we don't do CHAMPS. We don't call it that at least. But there are great elements in both of those, models. There are great ideas in other models as well, and you just have

to make it your own based on the needs of the school and the students. So, long story short, we don't necessarily like have a particular model that we follow here. But Restorative Justice is not a model, it's a mindset, right? And that's just how we approach all work here at Westshore.

- (2) **Compatibility:** RJE will diffuse faster within schools that already have cultures that are compatible with restorative practices. Westshore fares the best on this attribute followed by Sunshine, Timber and Somerset.

As stated previously, the principal of Westshore mentioned that a change in heart towards RJE and relational practices was setup by the previous principal, before she came on board. Thus layering RJE structures atop of compatible values led to a faster uptake of RJE at Westshore. In a similar manner, the dynamic leader of Sunshine infused an upbeat, positive, relationship building rhetoric within his building, as resonated by many. There were overt and covert signals being sent to Sunshine's personnel regarding how RJE would fit well into the school context. Sunshine's health advocate goes on to state:

They've been pushing this, the four tenets of the school – F.I.S.T – Family, Integrity, Service, and Tenacity. And there's this sort of intrinsic science like helping a student feel like, you know, you're calling them on something good. There's the physical sign - giving them a fist bump in the hall, you know, and things like that. The staff is really trying to make part of their being, so that they can do it in the school with the kids. And I think the kids are buying into it.

In contrast to the welcoming atmosphere that characterize reception at Westshore and Sunshine, Timber and Somerset fared low on the compatibility index. Chaos and mistrust was the name of the game at both schools. As witnessed through the multiple visits at both schools, rough handling and hand-cuffing of students, a fire

engine and several police vans stationed at Somerset because students had set fireworks in the building, and the fire alarm being set off at Timber whilst interviews were in progress, one of the police officers, who exclaimed “Are you kidding me, not again!” The drastic change of leadership has not sat well with the staff especially with regards to being told to conduct RJE practices. The principal attributes a poor culture of collaboration at Somerset even though the school has one of the highest academic indicators. Such aspects were indicative of the fact that the existing values and practices were incompatible with RJE. Somerset’s principal goes on to state:

I think the hard part and like my work is to contain it until I really let the teachers know that like they’re doing the right thing, they can trust each other. They don’t trust each other, and so, that’s a problem. Like, staff here doesn’t trust anyone. They don’t trust each other. So, it’s an issue. There’s no program to like just build trust. But the hard part is to do it, and then at the same time keep like the academics high. Cause that’s the hard thing. There are really smart teachers, and there are really smart kids, and our academics are really great. So I feel like people are feeling like everything’s been shaken up, and everything’s different. And I’m like: I haven’t even touched the curriculum. Like, the curriculum’s the same.

- (3) **Simplicity:** The ease with which personnel understand and utilize RJE practices reflects its simplicity. Sunshine fared the best on this attribute compared to the others because of the kinds of in-house training, awareness generation activities and personnel experiencing RJE first hand. This helped enhance the staff and student’s skill and ease of use of various restorative practices. In fact, at both Sunshine and Westshore teaching staff is presently being trained on conducting proactive peace building circles within their classrooms focused on prevention and de-escalation of conflict.

Personnel expect social workers to conduct RJE since RJE resonates with their social work training and background. However the credibility of RJE's simplicity rises in personnel's eyes when they witness their peers sing praises of the approach. The student intervention specialist at Westshore states that Tier 1, universal RJE training is currently operational at her school. Staff learning about RJE's utility value from one another enhances their belief in this approach, as she states:

At the last PD, we have a teacher who already started implementing it in her classroom so <name of social worker> has been partnering with her, getting up there, getting them going, eventually, he's going to be out of the picture. So she kind of gave an anecdotal to other teachers about like the experience, what is offered, and she's a SPED teacher so she has a tough group of kids in one of her classes. And so she was able to really talk about why it's helped so much and so that was kind of our next step of like incorporating it, exposing it, so that other people can understand like, hey, this isn't just something that the social workers are saying. You know what I mean? Like it's hard because not everybody understands what social work is. And so sometimes, things get put it and say like, oh, that's what social work is. Oh that's, you feel like that and you have that belief in you, oh, because you're a social worker.

On the other hand, one-off introductory sessions about RJE and poor communication (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013) are not likely to help staff comprehend the simplicity of RJE. Such was the case at Timber and Somerset. For instance, the mathematics teacher at Somerset stated that RJE practices were a "black hole" wherein staff were not apprised of how and when to deploy RJE, thereby lowering its simplicity and ease of use. She states:

I think the overall consensus is like they believe in it, but again, we have so little information about like what's really happening. You gave like a 10-minute presentation before school started about how to have restorative conversations. And then, whenever we say, okay, well, dean, this is what happened. And they said: we'll have you had a

restorative conversation. It's kind of hard in between all the swear words. So, like, there is kind of this. I wish we would have a model. So, they gave us interesting PowerPoint and they're saying that this is the ladder of consequences, but there's still a very much black hole of saying like, well I guess this is what should have happened, did it happen, did it not.

- (4) **Triability:** This is the degree to which RJE can be experimented upon on a limited basis to help further contextualize and customize its use within schools. Westshore and Sunshine are at par with respect to this attribute and have fared better than Timber followed by Somerset.

For instance, at both Westshore and Sunshine, personnel have been encouraged to experiment with RJE, assess its value and contextualize its use within their schools. Personnel at Westshore have re-invented the official RJE term and colloquially refer to the RJE process as, "Let's squash it". Re-invention of innovations is positively correlated to their sustainability, since it indicates that members regard the innovation as their own (Rogers, 2003). As stated by Westshore's principal, teachers are volunteering to get trained on RJE presently. However as more teachers get trained and begin experimenting with RJE in their classrooms, the principal will begin mandating such trainings. She states:

Teachers are opting in so, so far like about thirteen teachers have opted in to get training so they're giving up a lunch period To just go and-- cause they wanna find out more they believe in this work they wanna learn how to do it better. But it's optional at this stage. But the idea is the more and more that teachers' start doing it and start achieving success and then they talk about it, showcase it to their peers then more teachers are gonna get interested in making-- continuing to do this and then I'm left with only a handful of people who are saying no then I can make it mandatory. Like this is not optional anymore cause everybody-- most people are on board

Conversely, at Timber and more so at Somerset, the prominent perception of RJE is that it is impositional and unwarranted. Personnel lack the opportunity to customize RJE to their school context. The security personnel at Somerset believe that the alterations made at the policy level, i.e., changes to the SCC are not reflective of the ground reality at Somerset. In his opinion, staff feel compelled to follow the principal's direction who they believe mirrors changes at the district level. This has surmounted in staff feeling alienated and unmotivated to diffuse RJE at their school, as he states:

To put it like this, the dean hands are tied on what she can do now. If a kid did certain thing, now they can't give the same consequences as before. You got people making the rules that don't work with the system. I think if you are out here, if you're in the hallways, or if you're in the schools every day, you qualify to write these rules. But if you're not dealing with it and seeing it... If you're not in the school seeing it up close, how can you write a rule? Because right now the way I see it, when there's no consequences, no motivation.

- (5) **Observability:** The benefits of RJE must be clearly observable to others for only when personnel 'see-feel-change' (Kotter & Cohen, 2002) will RJE excel. Table 7 indicates that this attribute was most prominent at Westshore compared to the others, with Sunshine following close behind.

The RJE impact data, as provided to me by the principals of Westshore and Sunshine high schools showcased how exclusionary disciplinary practices like OSS are on the decline, and this decline has been accompanied by a rise in the amount of RJE practices being utilized within the building (Refer to Appendix F). The principal at Westshore emphasized that it was important to intermittently showcase results from various relational practices like RJE, for continued staff engagement and

investment. This statement is in line with Kotter and Cohen's (2002) observation that short-term wins must not be misconstrued as random occurrences but publically acknowledged and celebrated.

Visibly, the need and the utility of the police room should also diminish as RJE and SEL initiatives gain prominence within schools. This aspect was resonated by Sunshine's RJE coordinator who states that the roles and the need for police at schools have changed since major RJE reform has been brought about through the partnership endeavors. Interestingly, one of the police officers I spoke to has sought out RJE training since she has a lot of faith in restorative practices and felt that the services of the police were no longer relevant at Sunshine, given the cases are often diverted to RJE efforts by the Dean and the RJE coordinator. Sunshine's RJE coordinator states:

It's interesting cuz I was talking to the police officer and I'm pretty close with both police officers and they're wonderful. But I talked to them, a few weeks ago and I was asking them like, you know, cuz like to me kind of like--- I would never say this to their face but it doesn't really seem like they do much. And not in a rude way, just like in a there's just not a lot coming their way. And so I kind of asked them like what was it like kind of before the peace room and after the peace room. And they said like before the peace room basically all the conflicts that were happening a lot of them would just get sent to the police room. And they said like, now that you're here, like we really don't do anything unless it's super serious. We just send everything to you or to you know, Mr. <name of Dean>

In a similar vein, RJE was seen to provide a platform for student voices to be heard especially amongst black boys. Because as touted in the literature, African-American male students have been disproportionately impacted by exclusionary, retributive sanctions in the past. Restorative practices taking place within the peace

room has seen to bring about a positive impact amongst these students, wherein they are afforded an opportunity to ventilate their feeling as well as hone their SEL skills with respect to learning how to handle their discontent. In the past students would often act out their discontent and automatically rendered a consequence without understanding why they misbehaved in the first place. For instance, the Mathematics teacher at Westshore says:

I haven't ever been in the peace circle with any of the students but I know what happens. And what it allows is students to be heard. Especially students who have never really been heard before. And students who are going through depression and nobody knows how they feel, it allows them to express how they feel. It gives other students an opportunity to actually experience empathy for students and peers of their same age. I've heard stories of students having peace circles and like, boys! We are surprised when boys show emotion. I still stereotype that they're supposed to be sort of, you know, hold on to their feelings and not show them. Where, you know, there have been male students to break down in peace circles, you know, in tears and there'll be another male who'll say--- you know, pat the guy on the back like, "man it'll be ok" you know? And just to know that somebody's heard you--- that feeling--- I think it does a whole lot for students who are here and that are suffering.

Such observable results were not so apparent at Timber and Somerset. The administration often declared that RJE was a victory at the schools much to the dismay of the staff. As stated in the literature declaring victory prematurely is likely to be met with resistance (Kotter, 2007). For instance, with the drastic change in leadership at Somerset, from an anti-RJE to a pro-RJE stance, staff were bewildered to learn that RJE was yielding positive results, as stated by the administration. For instance, Somerset's counselor states:

We went from a highly punitive-administration to now more of one whose dialoguing and or is that soft--or is that our kids taking advantage of that. Is that really is that really

changing behavior And-and being more preventative--It's hard to you know, it's hard to measure what you don't---observe.

Thus personnel at both personnel at Timber and Somerset were highly skeptical and suspicious of the RJE impact data that was being presented to them. Many felt that establishing cause and effect with regards to RJE bringing about a decline in OSS- was an oversight. As Timber's English teacher believed- discipline data could very easily be manipulated to tell a story, which very often does not reflect ground reality. This resonates with what Payne (2008, p.5) states regarding good ideas which are understood out of context, get reduced to "The Solution", they often become a part of the problem. The English teacher, one of the founding members of RJE at Timber states:

You know, just people who are in the school being like Restorative Justice is working because look at the number of suspensions that have gone down. And that is great. And there's definitely truth to that, but those numbers can also very easily be manipulated. Like saying something like <name of former Dean> is really by the book. But saying something like, you need to take the rest of the day off. Call your mom to have or come pick you up. That's a suspension. But that doesn't have to be. It doesn't have to be, right? Or, you know, you can't come back until a parent could come back with you. That's a suspension. You know, like especially if a kid is like: oh, my mom works for the next four days. Then it's like: well, we'll see one day or five. I don't know. I think those numbers and that language can be very manipulative. Yeah, the thing is also, I mean, not that I know there's a lot of power in the work of Restorative Justice, but to again state that you directly attributing your reduced numbers of suspensions to it is, I guess it gets tricky. It's actually a harmful thing that happens because it sets a sort of like false reality or the false precedent of what is possible without the full picture. And I think the reduction in suspensions, while there is a lot of good work that's going on while Restorative Justice is a big piece of that, it can do potentially that same sort of damage.

All in all, the findings highlight that for RJE to gain positive momentum within schools, personnel need to understand and acknowledge that RJE is the best course of action available to them (Rogers, 2003). The faster the uptake or diffusion process of RJE within schools, the better is its integration prospects. Partners should strive to outline these five critical qualities of the RJE innovation, to ensure its survival beyond implementation. As one can observe from the findings stated above, Westshore high school has the highest degree of prevalence of these five attributes amongst all schools, which signifies that personnel understand RJE's worth, as its value was being spoken off amongst its members. On the other end of the spectrum, Somerset Academy's degree of prevalence of these attributes were almost non-existent, which meant that the diffusion of RJE has been faulty from the get go. In light of these findings, the next section will delve into RJE's integration and sustainability.

Restorative Justice Integration: Framework or tool?

In the 1990s, restorative practices were seen as just another behavior management tool in an educator's toolbox. Whilst a very handy tool, it was overlaid on top of existing school disciplinary practices that were often punitive and reactive in nature. The focus gradually broadened to thinking about how to prevent incidents from occurring in the first place, through relational practices and catching small issues early before they escalated. The continuum of practices led to a range of possibilities and existing practice and structures were sufficiently challenged to force change (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). This begs the question- is RJE serving as a guide or theoretical framework for enhancing other SEL competencies or is it another program being used amongst the menu of interventions at offer in schools?

Drawing on the review of related literature and based on the perceived attributes of the innovation as stated in the previous section, I have categorized schools into two-major

groupings: RJE as a part of discipline (more in line with the historical application of RJE) and RJE as a part of SEL (more in line with the current understanding of RJE). Timber and Somerset fall into the first categorization, and Westshore and Sunshine fall into the second categorization (Refer to Table 8). I will compare and contrast each row in Table 8 to one another so as to demonstrate the difference between RJE being integrated as a part of discipline versus RJE being integrated as a part of SEL.

Table 8: Comparison of RJE as a part a discipline versus SEL as per study findings

RJE as a part of discipline	RJE as a part of SEL
Deficit framing	Asset framing
First order unconscious change	Second order change/first order conscious change
RJE as a fad	Sustainable RJE

Deficit versus asset framing

According to Wadhwa (2016), deficit framing occurs when students are not provided an opportunity to participate in the restorative process except as an add-on to punitive practices. The markers for RJE success are often based on whether students recommit infractions that bring them into RJE practices in the first place, lowering the suspension numbers and reducing the number of fights in the building. Asset-based framing on the other hand is about building community, building understanding and teaching communication skills. There is a comfortable marriage between the values of the school and the values of a restorative approach to problem solving (Wadhwa, 2016).

On analyzing the student verify log presented by the principal of Timber high school, one can observe that restorative conversations accompanied several ISS, indicative of the fact that RJE supplemented other exclusionary disciplinary practices and was not viewed as a true alternative (Refer to Appendix G). Misbehaviors at the school were not accompanied by

the ideal of “circle or suspension” but instead it was the notion of “circle and suspension” (Wadhwa, 2016). For instance the principal at Somerset believed that for RJE to set a good precedent it would have to operate in conjunction with punitive approaches because otherwise students would not have a yardstick to measure it by. As the principal says:

I think it’s important to recognize that suspension is not our first go-to. However, we do need to suspend kids, or discipline kids in a punitive way in order for the restorative piece to have some teeth. And I don’t think that that is. It’s hard to make that link between restorative and punitive, but I think it’s important for teenagers specifically because of their brain development.

Resonant with a typical retributive approach, this deficit framing of RJE places the onus on the students to self-correct their own behavior, without any learning associated. Thus wrongdoers are labeled as problem children and no attention is paid to the harm done to the relationships in the first place (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Inherent in the statement made by the social studies teacher, the students at Timber crave structure and order, hence being strict and rendering punitive consequences befit such student’s context. In his own words:

I am strict. I believe that it should be front-loaded that those policies need to be taught. Absolutely do. They need to be consistent. I believe there needs to be a level of punitive that goes with that. I would have to admit that. Punitive is something that I see that works. I believe these kids crave structure. They crave it. They want it. They may not even necessarily know they want it. And we need to give them structure. So much to help them to do that. That is different than let’s say a suburban school, where a loose structure can really facilitate the creativity of students, allow them to do that.

Thus it feels like students are facing manipulative pressures to participate in restorative practices because if they fail to comply, then schools can take on a more heavy-handed retributive approach. Adversely, at both Westshore and Sunshine, schools that operate from an asset-based framework, there is a recognition and commitment to the notion

that RJE works in tandem with the broader framework of data, systems and practices rather than as another program that teachers are mandated to use. Restorative processes and SEL complement each other, as RJ supports SEL by providing a tangible vehicle for teaching and practicing SEL and for addressing anti-social behavior (Jain et al., September 2014). For instance, the SPED English teacher at Westshore believed that operating on a relationship building rhetoric provides immense flexibility to personnel since they are able to concentrate on their roles and focus on prevention and de-escalation of conflict rather than reactive restorative responses. Such an asset based framing to RJE is more conducive for student learning. In his opinion:

I think it's, you know, it's relationship building. Being allowed, teachers having the time. You know, being allowed the planning time to plan really---I think this is at the core of it and it's like very you know, it's very important. More than, more than Chicago Public Schools understands is teacher planning time. And being able for teachers to be able to be walk in their classroom knowing what they're gonna teach, how they're gonna teach it, how to engage the kids, and how to plan for things to go wrong in their classrooms.

Trust and respect lie at the heart of asset framing. Leadership is values-based and transformational, and leaders walk the talk, and model the required change. For instance, given Sunshine's past tumultuous history the current principal had to regain the veteran staff's trust and belief in his vision. Therefore, unlike other school principals, he has chosen to locate his office amidst teachers' staff rooms and classrooms. This act helped enhance his reputation as an accessible leader and as someone who was fair and paid equal attention to staff and student concerns. The principal of Sunshine states:

My office is now the main office. I wanna be near the kids. My office is above here, on the floor, where 60% of the classrooms are. I want the kids to be near me. That's why I'm here. And the teachers, I want to be near the teachers. If I'm down here, I'm not near

the teachers. And so, I think that there was a lot of distrust. And still a lot of trust that needs to be made, even with the principal and teacher. Since there is distrust like, with power, there's also distrust with teachers. So, we're still working on trust. And I think you always have to work on trust.

Concurrently, Sunshine's RJE coordinator presented me with a copy of Sunshine's peace room report (Refer to Appendix H). On observing the document, it emerged that RJE is the norm at Sunshine. RJE poses as an alternative, it complements and supplements all other exclusionary and non-exclusionary sanctions meted out within the building. The RJE coordinator states, "It's what we do around here, that's how we deal with things". This is in direct contrast to the deficit framing at Timber and Somerset, where RJE is a part of the ladder of consequences and is not understood beyond a supplement to punitive sanctions.

Therefore, for the restorative approach to be successful in the long run, it is imperative that healthy relationships are the bedrock of the building, because if healthy relationships are non-existent then RJE will be met with the question, "What are we restoring to?" (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). The findings showcase how schools should aspire to operate from an asset based framework rather a deficit based framework because the job of culture change should ideally result in a strengthening of relationships and social capital. This is more likely when schools embrace RJE as an asset to their school, wherein it provides a true alternative to punitive practices and brings about lasting change within schools.

First order versus second order change

According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013), first order change is about tinkering with what you already have. This format of change only proves to build sustainable RJE practices, when the school environment is conducive to change, i.e., if the school has a strong relational focus that is values-driven and the implementation of restorative practice is aligned with a

school vision that is relational in nature. First order change can be conscious, which is well thought out and layered on top on an existing relational culture, or it can be unconscious, when planning for change is often haphazard. Nevertheless Thorsborne & Blood (2013) state that if schools are embarking on change reform through RJE processes, then second-order change ought to be the yardstick. Second order change, a more complex change management effort is necessary at schools that are striving to do something fundamentally different from what is happening, and the process is usually deemed irreversible.

Given that neither Timber nor Somerset have a conducive relational culture within their schools, the newly appointed interim principals opted for first order unconscious change because of some of the reasons laid out by Thorsborne and Blood (2013). These reasons notwithstanding included the lack of a clear mandate for whole school change at the schools, insufficient resources both financially and staffing wise, an urgent need to address rampant behavioral issues, being unsure about the current practice in place, staff resistance and most importantly, restorative practice being perceived as just another ‘tool’ in the behavior management tool bag.

In contrast, at Westshore the principal embarked on first order conscious change because when she was appointed to her term, she was squarely aware that the school community was already relational and cohesive. Thus the Westshore principal’s focus was on developing consistent language across the community and tweak what was already working at her school. Sunshine’s principal decided to embark on second order change because when he took over the reins at the school, his school was on academic probation, was chaotic and lacked a relational focus. Thus he had to embrace practices that were fundamentally different in order to make change stick. In bringing about second-order

change, he, the big “L” at Sunshine has encouraged, nurtured and supported small “l” leadership throughout the school (Kotter, 2012a).

Specifically, this study will compare first order unconscious change to first order conscious change/ second order change on three parameters: 1) hierarchy of RJE responses, 2) pervasiveness of RJE within the school and 3) accountability pressures.

Hierarchy of RJE responses

A consequence of embarking on first order unconscious change, results in primarily reactive restorative practices being used to quell crisis’s that arise within the school building. Reverting to Morrison’s hierarchy of RJ responses (Refer to Figure 3), Somerset and Timber have been operating at the intensive and targeted level of RJE. For instance the RJE coordinator at Timber highlighted the rampant emergencies that occurred within the school, which often disrupted peaceful RJE processes. She also highlights the fact that Timber’s students have become so conditioned to responding to authority and punitive sanctions, that they have been unable to hone their SEL skills to truly engage in restorative practices. Thus only engaging in reactive RJE will not lead to whole school change since such practices are only used to put out fires in the building, without being provided an opportunity to build relationships. As Timber’s RJE coordinator states:

I think really solidifying the accountability piece for students. There's a lot of crisis management and putting out little fires that keeps me from making sure that things are getting done. So like I might have to cancel a mediation because a fight broke out. Or because someone was killed and a lot of students are grieving. I think the crisis management is a big challenge because it keeps me from doing something consistent and being consistent is really important with young people and with staff. So that's been a big challenge. Participation from students. Like for the peer conference program or peer jury as you want to call it, that's tough because while it's meant to provide a more open

space for students because it's with their peers sometimes it discourages students from participating because it's not, because they're so used to like getting told what to do by an adult, they kind of don't take it as seriously. And so that's been a big challenge as well.

In comparison, RJE at both Sunshine and Westshore has been implemented and integrated in a staged manner, i.e., at the intensive, targeted and universal levels as purported in the literature. The RJE coordinators at both these schools mentioned that when they started out, RJE was mostly reactive but with time and an improvement in the overall climate, the emphasis is now on expanding RJE as a part of Tier 1, universal practices. Keeping future training prospects in mind, schools are enhancing internal staff capacity on conducting proactive, community-building circles. These aspects are more in line with whole school RJE change, as purported in the literature. For instance, Sunshine's principal vision to help his students and staff to conduct RJE training on their own without the assistance of professionals like the administration or the RJE coordinator. He states:

Well, this is the third year. We're doing more adult circles now than we ever have. We're also now doing mediations and peace circles with the elementary school kids who are coming over here. My hope is that the next phase of this, there's less fights in the school and less bigger conflicts. We're doing more proactive circles now. Or, like, a teacher would say: I'm really struggling with this class, or we're just not getting along as a group. They'll take the whole class up there. It's like a community circle. So, it's not like, there's been a conflict, or there's been any one incident. We just need to get better together. We need to grow. But I think the next step is getting more kids to lead circles, more kids leading mediations. So, when their classmates and <name of RJE coordinator> being more of a facilitator of kids leading circles, kids leading mediations.

Thus schools should aspire to operate across all hierarchies of restorative responses for RJE to truly become institutionalized.

Pervasiveness of RJE

At both Timber and Somerset RJE did not permeate the entire building, thereby causing friction between program efforts to handle matters restoratively and the school-wide reliance on more punitive tactics. For example, at Somerset, the peace room once a vibrant, open space for everyone has come to be associated with punitive, exclusionary sanctions. Somerset's RJE coordinator believes that RJE is regressing at Somerset, despite the Cherry Center's long-term affiliation at the school. Students and teachers used to reach out to the RJE coordinator for pro-active circle-keeping activities, but presently the RJE coordinator's role has been reduced to handling reactive referrals received from the Dean. People in the building barely know what the RJE resources at the school are and neither are they aware of the operations of the peace room. Thus RJE has become sequestered at Somerset as the RJE coordinator states:

When I first started here with <name of previous RJE coordinator>, she would spend a half hour to an hour checking in with any teacher that needed assistance and going over specific situations or scheduling circles and a lot of it had to do with the teachers more than the individual students but it seems that the teachers were having an easier time along the way dealing with students which also brings the atmosphere in the classroom to a better level to help the students. So, it kind of feels like we're going backwards now, where we're just like, oh you did something wrong in our eyes and now we're going to approach it, instead of having this like before intervention. Which, I feel like. It's almost like the restorative practice is used as a punitive response and that's so against what restorative practice is really about. Right? Cause it's about building relationships and trying to prevent those conflicts and instead we're now being asked to respond to them

In a similar vein, Somerset's RJE Assistant Principal states that despite Somerset's thriving academic indicators, RJE has not seeped into the overall culture of the school.

Restorative practices have seen crests and troughs within Somerset, directly related to the Cherry Center's ability to leverage their expertise- which ultimately has resulted in the center occupying a marginal status within the school building. As Somerset's Assistant Principal states:

I worked with Restorative Justice for like 20 years. My problem with it is that we've flirted with it here, and all the schools have gone really into it. But we haven't really implemented it. We implemented it in pockets. It's not that we give it a lip service, but it hasn't seeped in to the culture of the school. Not enough people are trained on it, not enough people believe in it or understand it, you know. I think in the discipline office yes. It's been a culture change for them. I think push comes to shove, we'd probably go away from it, just for expediency, you know, which is right, but just do it. So it's not, it's not been ingrained.

Conversely at Westshore, special efforts have been made to ensure that RJE is not associated with traditional discipline. Westshore's social worker, the current RJE coordinator told me about how the location of the peace room has changed over time, because he wanted to ensure that personnel were able to distinguish his role from that of the Dean. He states:

In the beginning of the year, I normally the first year, I normally just work the social-emotional part. I did very little partnership with the discipline office. I was in the 4th floor. Physically we were in the different and all of a sudden we said, this is not working, I need to know the pulse of the school. I need to know what's going on, you know. And so we moved in together, <name of Dean> and I. I was in her office last year. Yeah it was opposite. So when was in 105, the kids, when I walked in there, and here is the discipline – She does social work by the way. And here am I, a social worker and she's dealing with the discipline. I'm dealing with the social-emotional support. <Name of Dean> said, <name of social worker>, can you meet with this kid? He's still angry. And after a while, the kid they started to see me as a disciplinarian. So, I said, no, I don't want that, you know? We said that we have this support here and they're seeing me as a disciplinarian and no social work support. So, my interns were here, right across because it's easy access. So I said, no, I need to keep an eye on them more that's on the

one hand. And I need to separate myself from being considered a dean, although I have a walkie-talkie. Although, you know it appears that I'm always like a disciplinarian or whatever and working close to <name of Dean>, physically and I need to separate myself with them. That's one of the reasons. And now the kids are beginning to see that. They come in here instead of going over there or sometimes they think they're just late. They're coming here for me to help and get right, you know.

There is a whole school approach to the restorative philosophy and a consistency of practice at both Sunshine and Westshore so that everyone understands why RJE is being used, thereby enhancing their faith in the systems and structures that have been created. There is adequate resourcing attached to RJE implementation and maintenance at both these schools, making RJE more ubiquitous in the building. Personnel at these schools understand the restorative practices transcend beyond the peace room and the RJE coordinator at Sunshine is making special efforts towards the same:

Yeah. And our goal is really to like infuse RJ throughout the school. And so that's a big part of it too. We're trying to get it in different places you know.

Accountability pressures

The literature points to the fact that staff should not experience the implementation and integration of restorative practices as an imposition, but rather as a willing investment because else people will question the validity and authenticity of novel approaches (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013).

The network and central district has driven a lot of the SEL programming at both Timber and Somerset. Both the principals are aligning themselves with the broader changes in the SCC discipline policy and have begun declaring RJE victory prematurely (Kotter, 2007). Leaders at both Timber and Somerset have underestimated what it takes to implement and integrate RJE at schools that have not been readied for change. Change that does not

involve meaningful dialogue and participation from the people affected by the change is doomed to fail (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013).

Timber's principal actions are being watched closely by her network chief, and thus with the objective of raising her SQRP ratings, which is currently at Level-2, in need of intensive support- the principal feels compelled to take on RJE as per the network requirements. With the district presently mandating schools to take on restorative practices, it appears that principals in order to satisfy the district end up doing lip service to RJE.

Timber's principal very candidly states:

I think that challenge that bureaucratizing, whatever what you would say that, having it come from above, the challenge that it presents is that... It changes the dynamics. So, it changes from being this kind of homegrown process that's really about the individual school community to a process that you're supposed to follow. You know, and even one of the funny things about... Not funny, but ironic or frustrating even. When you enter disciplinary infractions for example. There is the box that you check that says restorative practices, so then you like click the box. And then it says: did you have a conversation with the student, did you have a conversation with a parent that's like... Okay, we should always check that box at Timber. So, that's one of the things that I said. But the frustrating part of it is that's so like, restorative practices are not a check box, right? But it's the district code that makes sure you're doing it, and it gives you a better, performance rating if you check off that you're implementing restorative practices.

There is a cascade of accountability in operation at both schools. Central district and networks place pressure on principals to lower their exclusionary disciplinary consequences. Principals in turn place pressure on their staff, especially teachers to implement RJE in lieu of exclusionary disciplinary sanctions. In the name of classroom management the burden of responsibility is inordinately falling on teachers shoulders as they are meant to handle disciplinary infractions and build a sense of community, within the confines of their

classroom. This has caused dissension amongst the staff. For instance, the Mathematics teacher at Timber believes that RJE is “CPS’ excuse not to handle matters of discipline”.

In contrast, the alterations made to the SCC were perceived as a timely change, in tune with the efforts being carried out at both Sunshine and Westshore. Even though, the leadership spoke of the district/network scrutiny, they did not succumb to external pressures. In the same light, the classroom management approach as being undertaken by teachers was welcomed. Roles have been re-negotiated around who is responsible for managing behavior and learning issues to increase the involvement and responsibility of classroom teachers. For instance, the Mathematics teacher at Westshore states that the classroom management approach is the standard at her school since it was important for teachers to focus on de-escalation whilst keeping her students’ best interests in mind. Such an approach was not considered burdensome but was embraced. She states:

A Westshore approach? Our first approach is that classroom management approach. If you're having issues with the--- a student as a particular teacher, as the teacher, I need to reach out to that student. It's my job to deescalate whatever the situation is and have a personal like conference with the child. It doesn't have to be a long sit down. It can be just stop by our hallway, what's going on? You know, is there a reason why this kid is acting out? And let them know, well you know I'm glad you told me because now, you know, maybe I can help you through this and get you back in class to get focused and then we can maybe do something about this later. And then after that, if that doesn't work, you know, we refer to the dean and we possibly just have a conference with the dean. And you know, maybe another adult can intervene. And then, it's like, ok that doesn't work. Let's talk to the parent cuz maybe the parent can be a little more forthcoming and if there's an issue--- that's between like student and teacher, or even like if there's a student-student altercation.

Change that follows Morrison’s hierarchy (2005b) of staged RJE implementation, reform that is pervasive and not sequestered and reform that happens because it is needed

and not because of the accountability pressures faced, will likely bring about better RJE integration at schools. The evidence presented in this section showcase that schools should strive to embark on second order/first order conscious change compared to first order unconscious change for RJE to be confirmed and sustained (Rogers, 2003).

RJE as a fad/fashion versus sustainable RJE

A common problem for schools that have an abundance of ‘off-the-shelf’ initiatives to choose from, is how to embed a new initiative before embarking on the next new one. Schools are usually implementing a range of initiatives and seeking to implement something different each term or semester. In the end, staff becomes reluctant to adopt any new practice because, in reality, they know that this ‘fad’ or ‘fashion’ will pass and before long they will be required to implement something else. Roger’s (2003) diffusion of innovation perspective highlights how innovations can become fashions or fads, because they lack utility value within organizations and face bandwagon pressures which only ‘signal innovation’ but will fade with time (Abrahamson, 1986). More so, school personnel have a generalized belief in program failure and professional development (Payne, 2008). These aspects were more pronounced at Timber and Somerset.

In order for RJE to not be understood as another fad or fashion, it must focus on refinement. Refinement is about the continual change process and attention to quality and sustainable practice. At this stage, implementation will be well embedded and there will be an emerging concern about how to sustain change and keep it alive within the school (Rogers, 2003). The more relational/restorative a school becomes, the more urgency there is to align all processes and people to operate restoratively/ relationally. Funding is critical to develop sustainable practice. Schools that are effective in working restoratively implement a range of initiatives in order to develop the whole school social, emotional and academic

learning environment, but they are also successful in explaining how all three aspects are critical to the overall school success and vision for change (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). Schools that develop sustainable practices have a long-term plan for ongoing professional development of staff and for bringing new staff on board (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). These aspects were more pronounced at Westshore and Sunshine.

Skeptics are just waiting for a reason not to come on board (Ferris, 2003). They have become cynical because they have felt unsupported by the organization in the past and have seen one too many initiatives come and go. On applying the diffusion of innovation approach, we can see that RJE at Timber and Somerset is being understood as another ‘fad’ coming down the CPS pipeline and not as a ‘fashion’ in terms of imitating other schools. For instance, the social studies teacher at Timber said that RJE has become a catchphrase at schools. He is well aware of the pressures placed on staff to practice and epitomize RJE. However he has figured out a shortcut. He knows how to use the language of RJE, not in the true spirit of the philosophy but as a way to avoid further scrutiny from his administration.

Timber’s social studies teacher says:

It’s also a big buzzword too. Yeah. Restorative Justice – that’s a cure to everything. You know, we read that in an article. You know, these big buzzwords kind of go around. It’s the new big thing. Oh, we have Restorative Justice. Oh, Jeez, they have... Just what a great way to take the heat off. I know, quite honestly, while I had, you know, problems, and I’m like I want it to go away. So, maybe we can have restorative conversation. Oh, that’s a great idea. Okay, maybe I will never do, but I’m smart enough to use the damn word, and got the heat off me for whatever, you know

RJE at Somerset and Timber is being comprehended as the saying, ‘new wine in old wineskins’ or as the mathematics teacher at Timber says,

If you work in CPS long enough, you'll start to get a little cynical about any initiative, because something new will come down the pipeline, about pedagogy or about discipline, or about whatever. And maybe it'll be around for a few years, and maybe it'll be gone in six months. Maybe it's well thought out, maybe it's, frankly, garbage. Maybe it's a new name for something you were doing six years ago. That happens frequently. Someone will wrap it up in a new bow and color something new, and all of a sudden we have a new acronym that we're all repeating, doing the same thing we were doing ten years ago, whatever.

At neither Somerset nor Timber have partnerships been able to make a clear case for change, and more importantly how the various SEL initiatives are aligned and relate to the whole, rather than being seen as separate initiatives with no interconnecting aspects. The RJE fad (understood as a program) is likely to dissipate as quickly as it was introduced, no different from other programs that have had similar fates at CPS. Somerset's English teacher very exasperatingly talks about the "business of education" wherein initiatives have their moments and then just fade, akin to a "pendulum" or "accordion". CPS has had phases of being harsher on students versus adopting softer, lenient methods to deal with students. Given the push for RJE reform at his school, he comprehends RJE as a part of CPS' softer, lenient methods of responding to students. Implicitly through his statement, we can understand that he is almost expecting that phase to die down as soon as CPS throws out a harsher approach to handling matters of student misconduct. As he states:

Everything in education is a bet. When I started, people said: this business, it's like a pendulum. Movements come and go. The same movements come and go. They just have different names. For example, in the 90s we had it was called Authentic Learning or Performance Space Learning. And that's also when collaborative learning first involved learning in groups, first advocated by Johnson and Johnson in the 80s. The same thing with the Cherry Center. It meant, let them do projects, and write something from the point of view of, all under the heading of creativity. Non-traditional types of testing. Well, we got no child left behind. And then suddenly everything became very

traditional, which it pretty much been standard practice since I'd gone through school in the 50s and the 60s and the 70s. And then, in the 70s, it was like, when I was in sixth grade, we had magic circles, which was sitting around and talking about your feeling. So, again, you have these periods of, it's very strict and regimented with testing. And now we're getting into moral values and character curriculum. And so, it's an accordion that goes back and forth, or it's a pendulum that swings back and forth. So, this is what's happening in, you know, in the business now. It's happening because of certain social realities that the old practices are thought of as marginalizing certain groups like African-Americans.

In contrast, at Sunshine and Timber RJE is not viewed as a program but it is understood as a broad framework, akin to 'the glue that holds all else together'. RJE is not considered a fad that will fade with time. Personnel at these schools have been made to understand how RJE operates in tandem with other SEL initiatives, and in fact helps bolster their effects. This was more pronounced at Sunshine given that the Dynamic Center operates on the premise that RJE needs to be understood in line with SEL. For instance, the Dean of Sunshine talking about how RJE lays the foundation for behavioral initiatives like PBIS to flourish, as he says:

Our cultural leadership team, we're really in the final couple of weeks of narrowing down how we want to teach the, how we want the lesson plans, PBIS in hallways and cafeteria. You know, we tried to do PBIS probably three, four years ago, but we didn't have the culture in the place to be able to do that. Because the school wasn't doing Restorative Justice, and so, there. You know, you have to have trust, you have to have relationships, you have to have really that belief in, a positive school culture before you do PBIS.

Leaders at both Sunshine and Westshore have begun planning for RJE's future prospects, be it in regards to training and professional development, extending contracts with CBOs, apportioning funds for a full-time RJE coordinator and most importantly, inducting

new staff and students to the RJE way of being at their schools. Freshman students as a part of their induction into a year level are immersed in lessons that actually teach them in explicit ways what the restorative paradigm seeks to achieve, as one cannot expect young people to participate in ways that personnel do not embody or are prepared to teach. These are schools that have embarked on second order change or first order conscious change, always with the end in mind. Invariably they make resources available, are on the search for or have received funding to support professional development, are willing to do what it takes, and have the leadership driving the change initiative (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). As Sunshine's RJE coordinator states with a lot of pride, Sunshine is eons ahead of other public schools because they have been focused on integrating RJE as a part of their everyday praxis. She says:

I think Sunshine is like very onboard with it .I think that Sunshine is in a really good place compared to a lot of CPS. I think that Sunshine's the norm, in terms of like the buy-in and the education of restorative justice. A lot of schools, you know, might have their version of a peace room or a restorative justice coach or some infusion. But I think Sunshine is probably like one of the best if not the leading kind of in restorative justice in the city and in CPS. And we have a lot of people come through from CPS to Sunshine to kind of learn about restorative justice cuz they hear about the good work and I don't know if you like have seen some of the DNA <reference to the newspaper article about Sunshine and the peace room> info.

Overall findings point to the fact that RJE sustainability is inherently linked to the means of integrating RJE within schools. Schools that strive to integrate RJE as a part of SEL (i.e., Westshore and Sunshine) have a better chance of sustaining RJE practice because change is more deeply driven into the fabric of the school culture and it becomes a part of the schools DNA (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). The goal of RJE integration is that change should stick and be deemed irreversible because schools are known to be resilient and can

very easily slip back into their old ways of operating (Lee, 2004). The findings highlight how schools that integrate RJE as a part of discipline (i.e., Somerset and Timber) do not have much lasting success since RJE is just being overlaid atop of retributive sanctions. This is in part due to the fact that the new principals have not understood the reformation that is necessary at their schools and are using the same dysfunctional social arrangements at their disposal (Payne, 2008). Integrating RJE as a part of discipline has led to further marginalizing RJE's status within schools because the approach is not pervasive and has a higher chance of dissipating with time. Thus the aspiration should be for schools to integrate RJE as a part of SEL rather than RJE as a part of discipline, it should operate as an overarching framework not a tool.

Given the findings from this section, I will delve into the section which focuses on whether RJE has transformed the way we view and understand conflict within schools and in doing so, has it truly departed from the traditional, punitive responses as showcased in the first chapter in Figure 1.

Redefining discipline through Restorative Justice

The three key pillars of RJE are harm, obligations, and engagement (Zehr, 2002). If any of these three pillars are missing, then one has to question whether the approach has been restorative. Simply sending a student out of the classroom to be 'disciplined' by another staff member who has a slightly restorative dialogue may result in some awareness and understanding by the student about their responsibility but it rarely attends to the needs of those impacted by the behavior and certainly fails on the engagement level. In this way, it is a little more than a punitive approach to discipline that has a mild restorative flavor to it (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013).

As stated previously, the dominant rhetoric currently in operation within CPS constitutes a ‘get tough on crime’ mentality, utilizes exclusionary punitive disciplinary sanctions to control student behavior and disproportionately affects minority youth. According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013), the typical retributive approach and the usual forms of punishment being used in schools include sanctions such as:

1. Removal from class to be sent to the disciplinarian’s office
2. Isolation in or outside of class
3. Detention and detention plus
4. Writing of lines
5. Removal of privileges (e.g., you can no longer use the student common room)
6. Not being allowed to go on a field trip or excursion
7. Group punishment (e.g., the whole class on detention)
8. Humiliation, belittling, name calling, use of sarcasm
9. Suspensions/ stand-down/ fixed-term exclusions
10. Exclusion or expulsion
11. Yelling, shouting, growling, scolding
12. Sending a young person to someone else to be ‘fixed’

RJE in conjunction with other SEL/non-exclusionary practices operating within CPS is striving to replace the dominant rhetoric at CPS. RJE serves as a guide or framework to institutionalize peaceful and non-punitive approaches within schools, with a focus in shifting the rhetoric from managing student behavior towards building, nurturing and repairing relationships. Past literature has highlighted how RJE is ‘the glue that holds everything together’, and is known to be firm, fair, and consistent that is strong on accountability and support. The process of RJE integration and sustainability speak to whether RJE has become

the norm or standardized practice at schools. However the larger institutionalization question is whether this care rhetoric has transformed the ways schools approach and address conflict and in doing so whether RJE has moved from the margins to the mainstream.

This section brings to light four important aspects that one needs to consider to understand whether RJE has undone the negative consequences of exclusionary discipline and if RJE is successfully operating as an alternate paradigm within schools. These aspects include 1) Closer examination of RJE impact, 2) Racial disparities in schools, 3) Peer jury selection and 4) Continuum of RJE practices.

Despite the findings in the previous section, which speak to the fact that RJE ought to be integrated and redefined within schools as a part of SEL over RJE as a part of discipline, on a closer examination I find that the institutionalization of the care rhetoric seems to be falling short across all schools. Notwithstanding Westshore and Sunshine's sound RJE implementation techniques and ability to integrate RJE as a part of SEL, there are vestiges of the dominant, traditional rhetoric of control still present. I will walk you through each of the four aspects and explain in what way RJE is falling short of its promise and potential.

Closer examination of RJE impact

RJE victory is often understood in the context of lowering suspension numbers. The central district as per the SERP plan wants administrators to keep their OSS low, only use it as the last resort and replace suspensions with corrective and restorative sanctions. On revisiting Table 4, which provides the descriptive indicators of the schools we can observe that OSS rates at Westshore and Sunshine have declined but that is not the case at Timber and Somerset. However this decline in OSS rates is not victory enough and needs to be examined more closely.

At Westshore, lowered OSS rates are being met with an increase in ISS, detentions and removal of privileges from students. This is resonant with Stevens' et.al, March 2015 report that spelled out how a decline in OSS is being counter-balanced by an increase in ISS. ISS rates appear to not be as much on the district's scrutiny as OSS rates, thereby leading to an increase its use and its perceived cost and benefits (Sartain et al., 2015). Essentially an ISS means that the student is still very much in the school building and thus has an opportunity to continue learning. However that is not what I found in my study. For example, at Westshore, the student advocate who assists the Dean has recently been appointed to handle matters of detention and ISS. There is heightened surveillance at Westshore as the students' disciplinary record is examined very thoroughly and a determination is made as to what their consequences will be. She told me that lunch detentions and removal of student privileges which often leads to them being isolated in a room where they carry on with their academics is very common at Westshore. Such actions represent the retributive sanctions specified by Thorsborne and Blood (2013), such as removal of students from the class to be sent to the disciplinarian's office, student isolation, detention and detentions plus and removal of privileges. As the student advocate of Westshore states:

Lunch detention if you have in school. So lunch detention is for minor offenses. If you come to school late, automatic lunch detention. If you're tardy to at least two classes, automatic lunch detention. So we pull the records, like every kid that came in this morning after 9:00 and on, they automatically have lunch detention today. If, at the end of the day, we pull the tardies. If you're tardy to at least two classes, you have lunch detention tomorrow. If you were disrespectful, and you were written up for some type of disrespect that wasn't extreme, then tomorrow you'll serve a lunch detention for your actions. But if you're in in school, like I have a student that's in in school. You automatically go to lunch detention because you have no privileges in the lunchroom. You're not to be around your peers. So you automatically have a detention. Now, I usually do lunch duty so I'm not usually aware, but if I have a nice amount of in-school

students, or if I have a student that was, did something extreme, then I make myself available and someone else is in the lunch room to swipe the kids in. And then he stays here and he's isolated. So he doesn't even get to go to lunch detention and be quiet. He stays in this one room. And usually in school, it's an empty classroom. So you not in a room here where people are in and out. You have company, you have time. I collect all the work from each teacher. So they come in, they check in here and have a seat for about 10-15 minutes and I print out the schedule and I go to each teacher and bring their work. So they're not allowed in the halls. They're not allowed to go to the bathroom; I escort them to the bathroom and back. Lunchroom, they go get their lunch and they come back to the room. You isolated. Ant they hate it. And it's hot.

This quotation does not imply that ISS is being used as an educational opportunity for students, but instead is meant to create discomfort and desistance from misbehavior without affording students an opportunity to engage in restorative practices. Interestingly even though RJE is used in conjunction with both exclusionary and non-exclusionary sanctions at Westshore, I observed that in the “Westshore Way”, the internal guidebook uses the language of “restorative consequences” (Refer to Appendix E). For example on page 31 of the handbook, for a level 2 violation for a first time offender, the teacher is meant to make a recording in the student handbook, and provide a “restorative consequence in the classroom (lunchtime detention to help grade quizzes, clean white boards, collate papers etc.)” It is unclear if the use of the term “restorative consequences” denotes reparations or restitutions to be provided to students as a part of RJE practices. However the term itself had a punitive flavor to it.

Sunshine’s principal, on the other hand, does not believe in ISS. However, the decline in his OSS rates, as was the case across all four schools in part is because schools are now permitted to remove the ‘troublemakers’ from their schools. This is in line with federal policy mandates that provide an incentive for school leaders to remove low-achieving

students (most disruptive students) from schools, over and above district mandates to lower their suspension numbers (Kelly, 2010; Advancement Project, 2010; Thorsborne & Blood, 2013). This could be one of the reasons there has been a decline in exclusionary disciplinary sanctions, in addition to leaders simply not suspending students. For instance, the principal of Sunshine states that he had no choice but to remove disruptive students from his school to bring about peace, reformation and revival of trust. Thus there is a looming threat that if students are being disruptive then there is a greater chance of them being counseled out to alternative schools, as Sunshine's principal states:

And again with the four principals in four years, there were a lot of kids that weren't being held accountable, by their principal. You know, when I walked in here, there was 18 year old, 19 year old kids and only had 3-4 credits. You know, that was unacceptable to me, so I moved those students to alternative placements – so GED programs. So I got rid of a lot of the kids that weren't here for the right reasons. And so, I think for the majority, I think that the kids that are here now are here for the right reason. They know that if they're not here for the right reasons, then I'm gonna find them another place to be, or another learning environment that's gonna be more successful for them.

At Timber high school and Somerset Academy, Table 4 indicates that OSS rates at both schools were higher than the district average. ISS and detentions are rampant at Timber, and in fact while I was interviewing the former Dean, I was alarmed to notice that there were a handful of students who were locked up in a room adjacent to the Dean's room without any adult supervision. The CPS SCC guidelines recommend the use of detention and ISS is permitted in certain circumstances, but only recommended as part of a larger behavior plan when appropriate for the particular student and incidents (CPS Guidelines for Effective Discipline, n.d.) However it did not appear that Timber was implementing a larger behavioral plan on behalf of their students, whilst granting them exclusionary sanctions.

In addition, there were big questions surrounding the fidelity of RJE integration. This resonates with the diffusion of innovation approach wherein in the process of re-invention and contextualization of innovations, the true essence of the innovation could get compromised (Rogers, 2003). The English teacher at Timber suggests that personnel with their half-baked knowledge on the subject of RJE felt that having a conversation with a student amounted to being restorative. Instead of focusing on ‘repairing the harm’ and bringing about ‘accountability’, major tenants of the RJE process, personnel were just looking for an apology. In addition, follow-through of the reparative and restitutive component of RJE was missing altogether; further raising doubts about fidelity and quality control. The English teacher at Timber states:

The thing with Restorative Justice is that, I think it gets maybe some confusion, or gets murky like. Well, I’m having a conversation with a kid. I’m not taking them to be punished. I’m not yelling at them, or I’m actually hearing what they’re saying to me, which is great. And that is like a part of it, but that’s not actually a restorative conversation. You know what I mean. That’s like the real technical part of me. But, you know, I’m like that wasn’t restorative. That was you listening to that student, but that was not a restorative conversation, And so there is this huge gap in the understanding of what like I know what that means and like in practice. It’s not how it’s panning out. Well, I think that that’s the hardest part. That like accountability piece that like, I think it’s because it takes a lot of time.

Even though one can partly celebrate the growing decline in OSS rates, punitive retributive sanctions still exist in school buildings in some shape or form. Also attributing the culture change within buildings to RJE is falsified since one must understand the larger institutional context in which schools are embedded in, as they face pressures to keep their exclusionary sanctions to a minimum.

Racial disparities in schools

Disproportionate minority contact is rampant within schools, wherein research points to how race, prior test scores and gender are intimately linked to receiving punitive sanctions (Stevens et al., March 2015). Restorative practitioners aim to reduce racial disparities in school discipline. However while doing so practitioners must be familiar with the institutions in which they are operating in to create lasting, system-wide change. After all, as Hereth et al., (2012) state, skeptics often wonder “whether harm can ever truly be healed or restored in a context where structural inequality is the pervasive norm” (p.257). Racial disparities will be more evident at schools that are diverse compared to schools that largely comprise of minority students. Hence from my sample, Somerset and Sunshine fit the diversity bill. Despairingly I found that DMC was still being practiced at both these schools.

Race and class dynamics were at play in Somerset, as a disproportionate number of minority students hailing from the community bracket³⁰ were being granted exclusionary disciplinary sanctions. This was exacerbated owing to the mismatch between the student and staff diversity at Somerset, wherein a majority of the white staff at Somerset had inherent biases against minority students as showcased previously. Somerset’s principal jokingly states:

There was a huge; it was just very disproportionate about the number of students of color who have been suspended versus the number that are enrolled. So, they’ve <the network> held us accountable for that. I get really excited when I suspend a white kid. Just kidding.

³⁰ As stated previously, Somerset had three rungs of students- IB students, Arts Program students and students from the community. There were apparent socio economic and race differences between these student sub-groups with the community students belonging to more disadvantaged backgrounds.

On the other hand, Sunshine's known to celebrate its student and staff diversity. However on asking personnel about the demographic of students who receive punitive sanctions, it was disproportionately African-American males. In addition, across all four schools personnel complained about RJE being ineffective with students with special needs, as such students did not have the cognitive capacity to comprehend RJE. With regards to the racial disparities at play, Sunshine's assistant principal admitted that black male students are disproportionately receiving punitive consequences. However in the same light, he states that Sunshine recognizes the issue at hand and is making strident efforts towards reforming their approach. He states:

African-American males. Yeah, the young men of color make up. I don't know what the last percent is, but they make up... We know from our data that over the last couple of years we were suspending far more African-American males than the population of the school dictates. I think they make up 40% of the demographics and they are at the suspension clip about 55, 60. So we know that a lot of our support needs to go into preventing that. <Name of RJE coordinator>, her and one of our other behavior intervention specialist have started a brotherhood group, to help address the issue and kind of get them, those students a little bit more support, and then people in those groups are the students in the past that we've seen kind of higher on the 'get in trouble' spectrum. Maybe not even suspensions, but certainly getting trouble. Because, you know, we don't wanna necessarily let it lead to suspension.

External forces such as neighborhood gentrification and the sprouting of charter schools appears to be a problem plaguing schools located in the South (Timber) and West (Westshore) sides of the city. These neighborhood forces have resulted in both these schools contending with threats of under-enrolment whilst striving to raise their academic indicators. Westshore's has been making good progress on the RJE front, but the momentum could potentially get thwarted because of lowered resources reaching the building. This similar

resource narrative is playing out at Timber as school that caters primarily to poor, African-American students hailing from criminogenic neighborhoods. The RJE coordinator appointed as a part of the Harmony Consortium, a positive force for change within Timber told me that the consortium's contract had not been renewed. This would serve as a big setback for RJE integration efforts at Timber since the reliance on the Harmony Consortium was high. Given the competing priorities that Timber is facing at the moment, with their poor attendance and academic indicators, this is what the Timber's principal had to say:

Yes, but when the school started that wasn't necessarily the case, cause Timber is not a neighborhood school. It is a school of choice, so you can pull enrollment from anywhere in the city. So, this year we're still kind of in the general region, our strategy being that we're focusing on 25 schools and trying to get 5 students from each of those schools, knowing that we may accept, you know, 200 kids. And only a hundred would come, but that's fine. So, at least with this model, you know, that would get us at least 125 students in our applicant pool or in our acceptance pool. And our hope is that we'll translate into a hundred students at school in September. That's our hope. It's an uphill battle. There's a lot of competition. It's one of the reasons why restorative practices aren't so important, because we're really fighting against people seeing our school as a fighting school.

The above quotation indicates that RJE is hardly a priority at a failing school like Timber, which presently is single handedly focusing on raising their student enrolment numbers or else they will be on the CPS' chopping block. In contrast schools like Sunshine and Somerset that are located in the north side of the city are plush with resources. For instance, given the popular media coverage of Sunshine's model tag bolstered by a renewed contract with the Dynamic Center, long-term sustainability of RJE is imminent at this school. At Somerset, even though RJE is being diffused and integrated as a part of discipline, RJE will be able to weather this transitory phase at Somerset given that there is an abundance of resources at its disposal. This was resonant in what Somerset's counselor had to say:

You know or there an issue with space or your there are neighborhoods they don't want to go to which is a shame because again it brings us back to a whole segregation thing. The schools in the north side are flush with people who want to come and assist and help and they have resources. And even though we're cutting budgets, we still have more money than you know five of the schools that would be on the south or the west side which again are schools that certainly could use those services. And they really struggle and try to get to those services but they don't have as much success.

The findings on how race and class inevitably affect RJE integration discourse within schools is very much in line with past research which has shown how zero tolerance approaches particularly exacerbate unequal treatment amongst students of color, those coming from disadvantaged families and those placed in special education (Fenning & Rose, 2007; Gregory, Skiba and Noguera, 2010; U.S Department of Education, 2010). The findings point to the fact that racial dynamics and tensions still exist within diverse school buildings. African-American male students continue to be the victims of exclusionary school policies. Being as racial disparities are issues of structural inequality that exist within CPS as a district, RJE has been unable to address issues of race and class within schools.

Peer jury selection

Peer juries were in operation across all schools as means to empower youth and help them become equal participants in the RJE process. However across all schools, academically advanced students were being cherry-picked to become peer jurors, which goes against the original RJE vision. Ideally students who themselves have undergone transformation through restorative practices, ought to go on to become peer jurors since they can be shining examples of the power of RJE. The RJE coordinator at Somerset Academy spoke to this dissonance wherein the administration wanted the Cherry Center to pick the creamy layer, "high functioning students" in lieu of students who have successfully dealt

with their conflicts through RJE. She states:

When I said like, it would have to be Thursdays after school, < name of the current principal> was quick to be like “umm, no, I don’t think that’s going to work because that’s when student government or student council meets” and she was thinking that she wants a lot of those students to be involved in this but we, kind of expressed that you don’t necessarily just want these high functioning students to be the leaders. Like, you want students who have actually been sent to the restorative or the peace room to deal with conflicts. You want students who are, have been a part of that process to take ownership of them. It’s a really great way for those students to excel in something and usually see their grades start to come up. Their relationships benefit from that. So I think to kind of just want one subset of students to be those leaders, I think is really harmful.

In a similar tone, Timber’s principal states that her students that are exceling at her school are the ones who are likely to become peer jurors and peace ambassadors especially since it was very difficult to convince students who have benefited from restorative practices to take on leadership roles and enlist them as peer jurors. She states:

I think it’s the usual thing with any, any organizational dynamic. You have like 20% of the people do 80% of the work. So, I have my 20% of the kids who are the ones who are on time and in school on time and in school every day, like: I wanna learn, I’m really excited about it, I want our school to be better. So, those are the kids who are on the students voice committee. They are also the kids who are doing service learning. They are the kids who serve as the peace ambassadors. So, like the same kids over and over again. So, they are everything. And they want to do everything. And they want the school to be really exciting. And so, I think getting that to translate to the rest of the kids, that’s the harder part.

Hence findings show that the peer jury selection process is not as straightforward as one would think. Inspiring and motivating students who may have benefited from the RJE process to go on to become leaders is not easy. However at the same time, cherry picking

students who are exceling at schools and appointing them as peer jurors goes against the original fabric of the peer jury process.

At Westshore, a school that prides itself for engaging students and staff using a variety of RJE practices, preliminary findings indicate that peer juries were often viewed as being separate from restorative practices. That was surprising, considering the literature points to the fact that peer juries are another form of an RJE practice. At Westshore, peer juries were seen as the prerogative of the Dean while peace circles came under the jurisdiction of the RJE coordinator, i.e., Westshore's social worker. Westshore's social worker states, "<Name of the Dean> sees a lot the peer jury. I do the most circles. I oversee the circles and social-emotional part". Hence peer jury almost feels like a punitive response being meted out by students to their peers and, with the Dean overseeing the peer jury process, power structures are still rampant within Westshore, thereby dampening youth voice.

With peer jury falling under the jurisdiction of disciplinary office, it could fall into the danger of being just another tool for dispensing punitive consequences.

Overall student findings emphasize that schools are projecting a very skewed impression about their peer jury practices. This is because on a closer examination, neither are the peer jurors those who have experienced restorative practices on their own, nor are students sharing the power dynamics with staff. Thereby rendering the peer jury process superficial and symbolic, wherein as Roger's (2003) would state, peer juries are only 'signaling innovation'.

Continuum of RJ practices

Past research has shown that if one is to move beyond RJE being seen as little more than another behavior management strategy towards repairing harm, then schools must focus

on proactive strategies to resolve underlying issues and prevent them from re-occurring. Proactive responses are often informed by what is happening within the school environment. The preventative, proactive layer is about developing a culture of care and respect. Ideally schools ought to be engaging in restorative community building circles in lieu of conferencing and mediation (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005). Thus it is imperative that schools follow Morrison's (2005b) hierarchy of RJE responses (Refer to Figure 10).

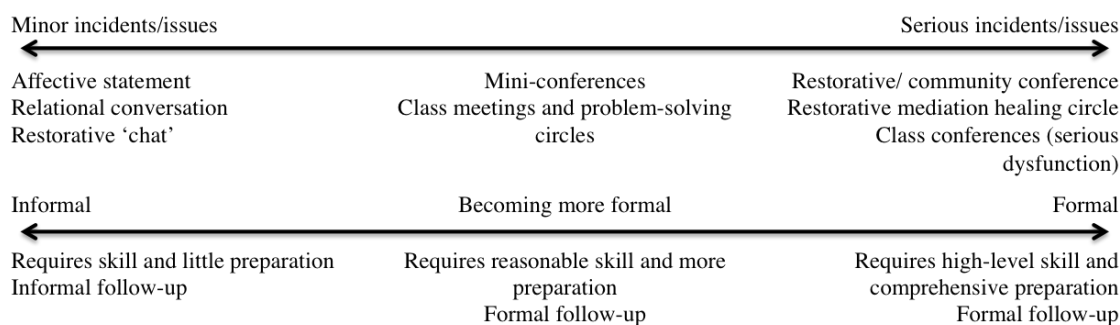


Figure 10: Continuum of RJE practices (adapted from Watchel and McCold, 2001)

On looking at figure 10, one can observe that personnel at both Sunshine and Westshore (RJE as a part of SEL) are utilizing the entire range of RJE practices within their schools, compared to Timber and Somerset (RJE as a part of discipline) that are concentrated at the more informal end of the continuum. For instance at Somerset Academy, the only major RJE practices that personnel engaged within involved having restorative 'chats' or conversations with students, which required the minimal amount of skill and preparation, as one can see in Figure 8. Even the 'chats' that Somerset's staff engaged with felt forced and insincere. For instance Somerset's social worker states that restorative conversations were insufficient and ineffective:

We do not have peace circles in the classroom. We do not have that. What we do have is more of a restorative conversation. And basically that's just trying to encourage kids to do the right thing. And when we, and so when we're talking like that to them, the teachers we're like we're just basically giving them a way of just getting away with everything. You know because the principal would be like, are you having restorative conversation? The assistant principal would be like, are you having restorative conversation? And we're like, okay, yeah but you guys aren't doing anything.

Prevention and de-escalation of conflict through community building and healing circles has begun at schools that integrate RJE as a part of SEL. For instance, the principal at Sunshine mentioned that as the awareness and understanding of RJE increases at his schools, students are now coming forward and informing staff about conflicts that can be diffused and prevented. He states:

We started talking more. They started coming to me and say: on Facebook last night, this girl called me this. I don't wanna fight her, but I just want you to know. And then we get them together, and come to find out that it's nothing, you know. Or, someone says something in class, and instead of fighting, now they say: I think she was talking me in class, I'm not sure. Put them together, and, you know, come to agreements.

As stated in the literature, restorative responses to misbehavior should include a strategic plan for restoration/ reparation (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005). Some common restorative sanctions include things like community service, restitution, and apologies amongst others (Stinchcomb, Bazemore & Riestenberg, 2006). Being as reparation is an integral component of RJE (Evans & Vaandering, 2016) I was surprised that across all schools, personnel did not provide me any substantial evidence with regards to how reparation or restitution is being carried out at their schools. This appears to be a blaring gap, since reparation of harm caused and being held accountable are imperative for RJE to be truly transformational.

The responsibility of the conduction of the continuum of RJE practices as shown in Figure 8, is largely the prerogative of the administration in conjunction with CBO's appointed RJE coordinator. Teachers are slowly getting into the RJE fold as they are being trained to conduct circles in their classroom. There is an assumption that non-teaching staff such as counselors and social workers, by virtue of their backgrounds have the knowledge and skills to conduct RJE, despite not being formally trained. Most of the support staff members have vaguely heard about RJE in passing but are unaware of what actually happens within spaces like the peace room. Interestingly, support personnel like chief engineers and custodians accidentally witnessed RJE while doing some repair work in the peace room. Thus if employees are not engaging in RJE practices and most do not understand its key tenants, values and principles then one must question whether whole school transformative change is realistic.

The diffusion of innovation perspective highlights the inherent problems with authority-based decision making within schools. The theory speaks to the fact that if a decision about an innovation is carried out as an authority decision, i.e., by a few important figures, and if these authorities happen to leave the school, sustainability is at risk (Rogers, 2003). The reliance on the CBOs is especially high given that they are catalyzing change within the building under the leaderships watch. For instance, at Westshore many staff members expressed concerns about the sustainability of RJE and the upkeep of the peace room post the agency-grant's expiry. The former Dean believes that the progress especially of the peace room's operations will be undone once the Harmony Consortium's RJE coordinator leaves Timber:

<Name of RJE coordinator> is a grant-programmer. I believe this is the last year of her grant. In terms of future, and I know she used to always say she is here to put herself out

of the job, so that the program will be self-sustaining. Well, the fact of the matter is I think some things will just affect the teachers' mindset about restorative conversation, restorative practices. Yes, that will be self-sustaining.

However, the maintenance of the peace room, peace circles and all peer juries... I'm afraid to lose that and that's uniquely her, and it's not that no one else can be trained. Under current burdens, no one's freed up to do that.

With both the Dean who recently resigned and the RJE coordinator's impending discontinuance, Timber's English teacher was very concerned about the upkeep of RJE practices at her school. When she and the RJE coordinator ran the peace room in the past, they had their hands full, as RJE is a very resource intensive process. Hence in a resource strapped environment like Timber, the school through the CTU is requesting the board to fund a 'protected position' for the RJE coordinator because without the Dean and the RJE coordinator, RJE will again fall on the wayside, as was its fate in the past. Timber's English Teacher states:

So I know that the Union, cause they had me go approach the Board. One of the things that they are proposing is that, there is a protected funded position for Restorative Justice coordinator in each high school. So, that would be amazing if that could happen. I'm really worried about what's gonna happen after <name of RJE coordinator> leaves. I am incredibly worried because who's gonna do that work? When is that peace room gonna get used? When there was two of us, it was a full-time position for both of us, you know, and I don't think people are at a place where if we said we didn't have a dean, and only a Restorative Justice coordinator. I think people would probably lose their minds. I don't know.

Furthermore, RJE as purported in the literature and as is being carried out within schools is understood as a voluntary process. Students are granted a choice with regards to whether they would like to participate in a restorative practice. But this very voluntary nature of RJE within school buildings makes staff and student participation difficult. This is in

alignment with Harrison and Hope's (2011) finding which emphasizes how exercising choice with regards to RJE is a tricky proposition. Earlier study findings have emphasized how imposing district mandates on schools can lead to staff resistance. However within schools as Timber's RJE coordinator states, not mandating students to participate in RJE makes it harder for them to understand the true virtues of RJE, thereby discounting the very reason RJE is being brought into schools in the first place. As Timber's RJE coordinator states:

There are students that this doesn't work well for because they're not there. They don't want to hear it. They just don't want to. And you know, when that happens some of them even are like, I'll take the suspension. So you know, I'm always a choice. I'm never an obligation.

Her statement reflects on the notion that punitive sanctions like OSS are enforced with greater fervor in contrast to RJE since students can exercise discretion to participate in restorative practices, however they do not have a choice but to accept their punitive sanction. Therefore, we can observe that with RJE largely being the prerogative of the administration and the RJE coordinator, with schools falling short of engaging in RJE practices across the spectrum, and the very voluntary nature of the RJE process is building RJE on very shaky grounds. This renders restorative practices as a superficial process, prone to personnel slipping back into their old behaviors and habits and eventually leading to RJE being coopted into the mainstream justice mechanism (Johnstone, 2002).

Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter seeks to understand the processes that lead to the diffusion and institutionalization of RJE across public schools. Diffusion refers to the speed with which an innovation spreads within an organization and gains positive momentum (Rogers, 2003). Findings from the first section highlight that if schools follow the five key attributes of an

innovation such as RJE, namely, it being more advantageous than other SEL initiatives and exclusionary sanctions, it being compatible with values of the care ethos, its ease of understanding and use, its ability to be re-invented to suit the school context and, its ability to have observable impact, will result in a faster diffusion process across members of the school. Given that time is of the essence with regarding to bringing in any change or reform within schools, partners who are striving to integrate RJE, can use these very attributes as a crutch to infuse such practices in the very fabric of the school and help institutionalize RJE.

Rogers (2003) diffusion of innovation perspective has been critiqued for its pro-innovation bias because schools do not operate in a vacuum. Elements that exist in the school's larger institutional environment such as funding agencies and regulatory bodies can create bandwagon pressures (Rogers, 1962, 1983; Kimberly, 1981; Abrahamson, 1991) for schools to hastily integrate RJE at the cost of it being understood as a fad or fashion (Carroll et al., 1996; DiMaggio, 1987; Scott, 1987). On revisiting, Figure 7 which maps out RJE reform at the policy and local school level I will extend on Matland' (1995) policy implementation framework as it aligns with Roger's (2003) fad and fashion perspective. As mentioned in the previous chapter, RJE policy implementation has taken on a top-down implementation stance wherein the changes in the SCC are being enforced at the local school level through command, control and uniformity (Matland, 1995). In expending their coercive authority, the district has failed to take into account the diversity amongst local implementing actors, i.e., school personnel at each school context. Therefore as my findings emphasize, how local level implementers, or street-level bureaucrats are responding to conformity demands with superficial compliance efforts leading to a bottom-up description of policy implementation called symbolic implementation. Symbolic implementation have high levels of conflict and high levels of ambiguity wherein the central principle is that local

level coalitional strength determines the outcome. This is intimately related to Roger (2003) perspective which emphasizes how fads only signal innovation (Abrahamson, 1986; Fombrun, 1987; Hirsch, 1972) and thus policy changes are only referential in nature since the policy changes are not reflective of local level contexts or interests.

On applying these frameworks, we can observe that schools wherein changes at the district level are being enforced on local level implementers, i.e., at Somerset and Timber respectively- local level implementers are resisting such coercive policy tactics by only making referential gestures to the policy norms and in turn interpreting RJE as just another fad coming down the CPS pipeline. Personnel at both these schools constantly complained about the fact that RJE policy demands seemed unfit to their local school contexts and in many ways they only superficially implemented RJE at their schools. Therefore these schools have been integrating RJE as a part of discipline, wherein RJE is only being understood as another behavioral management program, which is used as a supplement to punitive sanctions, no different from other similar SEL initiatives. On the other hand, schools like Westshore and Sunshine that have been successfully implementing RJE believe that their local implementation actions are in line with broader policy changes and in many ways their integration efforts of RJE as a part of SEL will be sustainable. Findings specifically state that RJE must operate from an asset based framework which emphasizes relationship building, first order change should be the norm for reform efforts within schools and change needs to stick and be sustainable. Hence one can observe that the more contemporary notions of RJE, i.e., understanding it as a overarching framework or philosophy leads to more long lasting, sustainable change within schools as opposed to the older notions of RJE, as just another tool in the behavioral management toolbox.

On revisiting RJE's definition in its application to school settings, Umbreit et al. (2005) state that RJE challenges us to think differently about what effective means, and is founded on a set of values and principles that redefine the meaning of policing and justice beyond strategies, tactics and programs. Thus the RJE integration process needs to be expanded to understand whether RJE is truly transformative in nature and more importantly, can it be distinguished from the dominant retributive approach that it is seeking to replace. CBOs who served as institutional entrepreneurs especially at the policy adoption state, strived to push for the original vision and understanding of RJE as a transformative paradigm that is reshaping the meaning of conflict within schools. However post policy reform, with more actors coming into the fore like central district officials, principals, multiple school level staff- the original idea and vision of RJE has not kept up to its transformative potential and promise. Multiple actors have essentially watered down the real effects of RJE practices and processes and in many ways RJE is gaining more prominence but is failing to redefine discipline within schools. As the findings highlight, that despite RJE being successfully integrated at schools especially those integrating RJE as a part of SEL, one can find traces of the punitive approach still in operation. RJE at such schools continue to operate on the margins whilst the dominant perspective is still retributive. Unfortunately RJE has failed to upkeep its promise towards minority, marginalized communities in terms of addressing issues of race and class at schools; because in many ways RJE just continues to perpetuate racial disproportionality at schools since it has not successfully become institutionalized or the mainstream practice at schools.

CHAPTER 9

DISCUSSION

The moral of the story is that good ideas will not save use. Just bringing good ideas into schools with severely damaged social infrastructure is tantamount to bringing a lighted candle into a wind tunnel- Payne (2008, p.34)

RJE being akin to a lighted candle being brought into public high schools, the critical question being examined is: will the RJE candle continue to burn? RJE is making its way into public school districts as a means of dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, zero-tolerance and exclusionary policies that utilize excessive force and exclusionary retributive sanctions to handle matters of conflict and discipline at schools. RJE is viewed as a communitarian paradigm that is seeking to nurture healthy school climates and redefine the notion of policing and justice within schools. The purpose of this study is to examine the unfolding of RJE at the CPS policy district level and across four CPS high schools in terms of the school's decision to adopt RJE, factors that impede and enhance its successful implementation within schools, and the way RJE gets institutionalized and sustained within schools. The aim of the study examines whether RJE is moving from a prior marginal status towards becoming more mainstream within schools. Towards this end, I utilize four key theoretical and conceptual frameworks namely institutional entrepreneurship, innovation implementation, Matland's (1995) ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation and Rogers's (2003) diffusion of innovation.

The discussion chapter comprises of the following sections, 1) understanding the study's contribution and how it advances knowledge, 2) a summary and interpretation of the study's key findings, 3) implications for social work policy and practice especially for

human service organizations, 4) study limitations and directions for future research and, 5) conclusion.

Contributions of the study

Literature in the field of RJE has largely focused on the impact evaluation of RJE especially in terms of reducing the number of exclusionary sanctions, bereft of studying the human service organizations that are receiving such practices, i.e., the schools themselves. CBOs who are the harbingers of RJE reform efforts serve as institutional entrepreneurs in my study and seek to infuse RJE at both the CPS district policy level, and at the local school level. To do so, I deployed an in-depth qualitative comparative case study unlike past studies, which largely deploy a quantitative survey analysis to studying RJE. Using in-depth interviews, I collected data primarily from three different sources or actors in the RJE reform process- the CBOs, CPS central district personnel and multiple school personnel at four school sites. The qualitative analysis compares and contrasts four CPS school-CBO partnership contexts and assesses variance of the RJE implementation process based on geographical school location (proxy for race and class dynamics) and partnership contexts (independent versus outsourced CBO-school partnership). Through the comparative case study design, the study drawing on the interaction of the four key organizational frameworks strives to understand the role played by each of the institutional actors with regarding to making RJE the dominant praxis within CPS. Hence in this way, the study provides a more critical examination of RJE's impact and places it within a broader environmental and policy context.

CBOs who have expertise in the field of RJE have been successful at influencing broader policy reform at the district level whilst at the same time embedding themselves

within local schools to infuse RJE practices. As the CPS central district is pushing the expansion of RJE throughout the district by taking measures such as drastically altering the SCC, and initiating the RP coaching model, I observe the link between policy change and on-the-ground change management at individual schools. As non-exclusionary practices such as RJE and SEL initiatives, which constitute the care ethos, gain traction within schools, the study provides insights on whether RJE is operating as just another tool in the educator's toolbox or is it being understood as an overarching framework to improve school culture and climate. Therefore the study advances our knowledge on whether RJE is being viewed as just another novel RJE program that will fade with time, or it adding significant value to the care ethos. Most importantly in its pursuit of institutionalization and sustainability, I shed light on whether RJE has redefined the meaning of conflict, discipline and justice with schools especially for marginalized, minority communities that need RJE approaches the most.

Summary and Interpretation of Findings

Five key findings in terms of the critical drivers for RJE reform within CPS will be highlighted in light of the study's contributions.

Finding 1: Discrepancy between policy and practice

The literature purports that RJE ought to be seen as a willing investment instead of an impositional process. Furthermore, leaders often scramble to re-write policy without understanding nuance and context of school environments. On one hand, the CPS district must be applauded for their efforts to bring about major alterations to the SCC, which incorporates more of a restorative approach than previously. At the same time, the CPS district much like other districts nationally, mandate their principals to lower their OSS rates and replace them with instructive, corrective and restorative sanctions. In light of the more recent policy level changes, I wanted to understand how local school level actors on the

ground were interpreting such changes at the district level. Matland's (1995) ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation along with Roger's (2003) diffusion of innovation framework served as an important guide to understand the relation between policy actors and local implementers.

Policy reform for RJE at CPS largely took place because of the unrelenting efforts spearheaded by CBOs and local communities who have been disproportionately affected by past, punitive policies. Hence adoption of RJE reform by the district reflects experimental policy implementation since RJE, local level actors or street level bureaucrats were largely informing how CPS should incorporate RJE into their discipline policy, which largely dictates practice on the ground.

At the local school level, personnel at Timber and Somerset felt that RJE was an impositional process being mandated by the district through their respective leaders. These are indicative of a more coercive, top down political policy implementation approach. The CBOs exist within these schools but have been unable to really affect RJE within schools because of the level of urban-flux and drastic principal leadership changes. Personnel at Timber and Somerset, felt that their leaders mirrored changes in the district policy, and these reform efforts were viewed as idealistic and unfitting to their school context.

There is a cascade of accountability in operation at these schools wherein districts/networks create pressure on administrators to lower their suspension numbers and increase their RJE usage, administrators then place pressure on their staff to implement and infuse RJE especially by teachers within the classroom. For instance, Timber's principal believes that RJE is like a check box one ticks to keep the district pressure off, thereby questioning the value of policy changes at the district level. Expectations are high around RJE implementation, but information and actual supports are missing at these schools. Hence

one can observe a discrepancy between policy changes and on the ground change management at Timber and Somerset. Thus in light of these findings one can observe how local level implementers or street level bureaucrats in order to make referential gestures to the district compliance mandates, are giving RJE lip-service at their schools and thus RJE is seen as just another behavioral management fad that will fade with time.

However, such a discrepancy was not as stark at Westshore and Sunshine because both administrators at these schools have taken careful measures to explain how their schools are partaking in the broader changes occurring at the district. Westshore has done away with her CBO partner, while Sunshine's CBO partner is very much in line with the principal's passionate ideals on RJE. For instance, Sunshine's principal has been an integral part of the policy reform process with the district. Personnel at these schools have welcomed this policy change and moreover believe that RJE ought to be utilized within the classroom to help de-escalate and prevent conflict. In addition, these leaders are acutely aware of looming district scrutiny and pressures however do not pay heed to such pressures as they believe in the true need and value of RJE at their schools. Thus is important that district policy needs to be very carefully doled out and explained and not be seen as an imposition to garner support and yield positive results. Else policy reform will fail to bring about truly transformative change within schools.

Finding 2: Precarity of partnerships

CBOs who serve as institutional entrepreneurs have been instrumental in assisting both the district and the local schools with regards to adopting RJE as a true alternative to punitive discipline. Given as they are the experts in the subject matter of RJE, there is the hope amongst CBOs that they will continue to assist schools and help further entrench restorative practices throughout the district. However given the resource constraints that the

district is operating under alongside the constant state of urban flux at local schools, CBOs have not been able to retain their prominence and agency beyond adoption of RJE. CBOs have taken on a consultant role for the central district especially with regards to amending policy. At the local school level, owing to a multitude of reasons over and above the chaos that dominates the principals often determine schools, the plight of the CBOs maintenance.

Within schools, CBOs in general hone more of an idealistic view of implementing RJE. This often clashes with the administrator's view who is operating in a space that is more complex and demoralized. Such dissonance was evidenced at Westshore, wherein the leadership has discontinued the Blossom Center's partnership. The Blossom Center, which operated on the outsourced model, felt their services were invaluable at Westshore. However Westshore felt that their services were ineffective, sequestered and redundant, since their internal staff could do a better job of infusing RJE throughout the school.

It appears that the Cherry Center's fate might follow in the footsteps of the Blossom Center. The Cherry Center has been operating at Somerset Academy for the past two decades. Under the previous administration it was de-prioritized because the principal did not believe in RJE. Ever since the new administration has come into operation at Somerset, internal problems within the center have made it harder for them to reinstate themselves. These center challenges have not been well received by the new leadership who in turn has further marginalized the status of the Cherry Center at her school since the leader feels that their services are ineffective at Somerset. For instance, Somerset's peace room is located in a non-descript location and the center currently receives reactive RJE referrals from the Dean, signaling to personnel that RJE now works in conjunction with disciplinary sanctions. Even though no formal decision about the Cherry Center's affiliation to Somerset Academy has been taken, the partnership is operating on very shaky grounds.

In contrast, the partnerships at Timber and Sunshine have born fruit. This is largely because the RJE coordinators from the Harmony Consortium at Timber, and the Dynamic Center at Sunshine are in tune with the school's pulse in terms of understanding the school's environmental context. The respective CBO RJE coordinators are both popular figures at these schools and their peace rooms are well visited by students and staff alike. However the Harmony Consortium has been finding it harder to infuse RJE given the turbulent school environment at Timber. Much as the Harmony Consortium would like to build up the internal systems and structures at Timber, since the school needs extended support, the partnership contract has not been renewed. This is a big blow to Timber's RJE efforts since the reliance on the Harmony Consortium, especially with regards to operating the peace room was high.

Dynamic Center on the other hand receives unrelenting support from Sunshine's leader. They are aligned in terms of understanding the school's overall vision and mission and Sunshine's leadership has been successful in renewing Dynamic Center's contract at their school, in order for them to continue infusing RJE at Sunshine. The Dynamic Center compared to all other agencies has the most cooperative and collaborative partnership with Sunshine compared to all other CBO-school partnerships; thereby continuing to serve as institutional entrepreneurs as originally envisaged.

At the district level, as the CPS RP coaching model gains more prominence CBOs in search of more economically viable approaches of partnering with schools are presently lining up to become RP coaches. This is despite the fact that these very agencies critiqued the RP coaching model as being too reductionist and shallow. The growth of CBO RP coaches within schools is adding to the precarity of these agencies because they are now slowly raising their dependency on the district for funds and resources. Hence in this manner their

institutional entrepreneurial strategies towards influencing changes at the district level are slowly diminishing. Thus in many ways the CBOs are falling short of their promise to bring relief through RJE to minority school communities that need RJE support and resources the most.

Finding 3: School stability and RJE

All school cases barring Sunshine had some degree of instability within them. This instability has inadvertently affected RJE dole out within these schools. Instability has been partly due to the urban flux, which is at play within these schools, and also the school's geographical location, i.e., a proxy for race and class dynamics affects the kinds of RJE and SEL resources the school receives.

For instance, at Westshore high school (located on the west side of Chicago) despite RJE being implemented fairly successfully within the school, the neighborhood gentrification effects have caused issues of under-enrolment and building under-utilization. As a consequence, the school is fighting for resources in general, which would inevitably affect the sustenance of RJE efforts at Westshore. A similar story is unfolding at Timber high school (located on the south side of Chicago). Timber was reborn as a small school back in 2010, when RJE was a part of the school's foundation. However once Timber's key founding members left the organization, the school has been in a state of crisis with multiple changes in leadership, high staff attrition, rampant corruption and a gentrifying neighborhood. Timber too is under threat of being closed down due to their poor enrolment figures. Moreover the current principal has been recently appointed to her position, thus this interim leadership continues to be met with pervasive distrust by the rest of the staff. Hence RJE is not a priority at Timber and has fallen by the way side.

There is an interim leader at Somerset Academy (located on the north side of Chicago) as well and more so, the current leadership who is an RJE believer stands in direct contrast to the previous leader who was very autocratic and did not utilize RJE. This has resulted in chaos as stated by multiple personnel at Somerset, however this chaos was not as prominent as what I heard and observed at Timber. Nonetheless, Somerset's drastic change in leadership has resulted in confusion regarding RJE's value and status at the school. Despite RJE's dole out being poor at Somerset, the school, the largest I had been in is plush with resources, has growing student enrolment and continues to upkeep its high academic indicators. Such a resource story was also evidenced at Sunshine high school (located on the north side of Chicago) which given its past probationary status has had a very successful stable run for the past few years, which in turn has led to RJE flourishing at the school. Sunshine's recently being touted as a model RJE school, has garnered a lot of media attention and has also renewed its partnership with the reputable, Dynamic Center, indicative of resources available for the sustenance of RJE.

Hence we can observe how instability within schools tends to particularly disadvantage RJE implementation and integration in schools that are located in poorer neighborhoods with fewer resources at their disposal. This study findings deeply resonates with the Payne's (2008) conclusions that especially in lower-tier schools, which harbor high levels of distrust, lack collective responsibility and are perceived as being less safe, impacts the utilization of financial and technical resources even when they are made available. Race, ethnicity and class as per Ferguson's (2003) explain the inequitable distribution of human and social resources at these school contexts, in terms of not being provided adequate resources towards infusing RJE practices at the whole-school level. The district continues to judge all students using standardized testing norms like the common-core standards, however

they do not provide all student equivalent opportunities in light of the findings (Payne, 2008). Post policy reform, one can observe how “contrived collegiality” (Hargreaves, 1991) through the use of power and authority is being exercised at schools and thus is being viewed with heightened skepticism. Therefore RJE policy reform is falling prey to the growing resistance and generalized belief in program failures at the local school level because RJE has been unsuccessful at reallocating and redistributing its resources to address gender and racial diversity as it intended to (Payne, 2008).

Finding 4: Pioneering Leadership

Principal leadership has emerged as being very critical to the RJE reform process within schools. An innovative leader whose actions meet his vision, and models expected behaviors would inspire and motivate change within the building (Hasenfeld, 2010). This was the case with the leadership at Westshore and Sunshine high schools. Westshore’s leader is known to be data-driven, democratic and ensures consistency in her ways of operations. She has made some incisive decisions such as discontinuing her partnership with the Blossom Center since they were considered redundant, she appointed her social worker (also the RJE coordinator) into the ranks of a full-time staff member, and the principal stays updated of the latest developments and advancements in the field of RJE. She has built sound systems and structures in place and created an internal handbook called the “Westshore way” as a reference for her staff with regards to dealing with matters of discipline and conflict. Her administration takes pride in the fact that the internal handbook which is restoratively oriented, came out before the major alterations were made to the district SCC. Talking about the district SCC, Sunshine’s principal helped the district make the SCC more restorative in its operations. Hence the leader’s passionate ideals surrounding RJE inspire reform within his building and, being a certified circle keeper himself, the principal encourages his staff to

experience RJE themselves by participating in peace circles. His accessibility in terms of being approachable as well his central office location within the building, has enlisted allies who believe in the power and potential of RJE at Sunshine. In addition, the principal's discretion to bring on the reputable Dynamic Center is being perceived as a sound strategic decision by many.

On the other hand, leaders at Timber and Somerset have not been able to inspire such change within their schools. This has to do with the fact that they are both interim leaders who are trying to find their feet and gain their personnel's trust. These leaders have opted for first order unconscious change with regards to RJE at their schools, since they have not taken, or perhaps not had the time to understand that reform cannot be imposed in schools that have not been readied for change. Thus principal's imposition and compliance for RJE has left a distaste amongst personnel wherein resistance to leadership's RJE ideals has been high, further causing staff to undermine the value and need for RJE at their schools. Moreover personnel have witnessed how past leaders have pedaled shiny new initiatives into their school buildings, with no lasting success. RJE was deemed as no different. Hence leadership has been unsuccessful at inspiring change reform at Timber and Somerset.

One has to keep in mind that perhaps the interim leadership at Timber and Somerset has been the major cause of RJE being unable to thrive within such school environments. It could very well be that if these leaders are able to garner their personnel's support and trust moving forward, RJE's momentum may pick up. But at the same time, the leaders present actions regarding RJE are not helping shape a positive future perception of RJE. For instance, Timber's leadership is facing competing school pressures and hence does not feel that RJE is a priority in her building. At the same time, the leader has de-emphasized the

operations of the long-term symbol of RJE at Somerset, the Cherry Center by focusing on activities operating out of the BHT.

Leaders need to be mindful of how changes at the policy level are being interpreted by their personnel on the ground. At the same time, they need to understand how their staff is receiving expertise from CBO sources, given that there are several such partnerships already existing within their school building. If leaders choose to become pioneers and harbingers for sustainable change and reform regarding RJE at their schools, they need to deploy their social skills at leveraging scarce and critical resources to build up systems and structures at their schools. Simultaneously they need to walk the talk, and model the appropriate skills that they would like their employees to follow.

Finding 5: RJE training reorientation

Across all schools the information, training and awareness surrounding RJE has been falling short. In many ways, I found that schools are misinformed about what the key tenants and core values and principles of RJE are, raising questions about the quality and fidelity of RJE. Personnel complained about a lack of depth and ineffectiveness of the RJE trainings being rendered at their schools. Moreover personnel at schools often face multiple impediments to seek out district level training on RJE.

Schools like Westshore and Sunshine, which are schools that are integrating RJE as a part of SEL, have better training resources since they are now at the stage of improving trainings on universal practices. In contrast, schools like Timber and Somerset are still operating at the intensive and targeted levels of rendering RJE responses; hence the future scope for proactive training is amiss. In light of the findings that RJE ought to be integrated as a part of SEL compared to RJE as a part of discipline, awareness building and a deeper understanding of RJE must also strive to reflect this difference in categorization. The way

personnel make sense of RJE; will differentiate whether RJE will be understood as just another tool in the educator's toolbox versus RJE as an overarching philosophy that nurtures pro-social education. Being misinformed maybe more harmful than being uninformed, thus RJE training with improved fidelity and depth should be the aspiration for all schools.

Implications for Social Work Policy and Practice

Findings from the study have implications for any novel innovation or holistic change efforts being carried out by human service organizations- i.e., the school district, the individual schools and the CBOs working within the school district.

Implications for Policy

- Findings have shown that district wide support and impetus for RJE are essential to keep RJE afloat within schools. Moreover the district engagement and involvement is necessary for school leadership to understand that their internal efforts within each school are bearing fruit, and at the same time they can call on the district for assistance and resources for the upkeep of reform efforts.
- District policy should strive to closely mirror community concerns especially if policy reform has been a bottom-up policy implementation approach. As in the case of the current study, the policy level actors ought to bring in CBO and/or community perspectives to the forefront so that the true intentionality of the policy reform initiative is kept in check and balance.
- One of the major concerns surrounding quality control and fidelity of RJE are related to training efforts. Towards this end, the collaborate with important players like the CTU and teacher training schools to incorporate RJE into their teacher training programs or curriculum especially in light of understanding RJE as whole school

change rather than another behavioral management program. Such training efforts would be efficient and expedient, since teachers who are seen as the critical implementers of RJE would also be skilled and have the subject matter expertise of conducting RJE practices with great fidelity.

Implications for Schools

- Strategic planning is critical to bring about any kind of reform or change within schools, with or without the assistance of a CBO partner. As findings have shown, if schools are not readied for change and change is carried out in an unstructured, haphazard manner then school staff will consider the reform effort as being impositional and will inevitably resist the change. Change needs to be understood as fulfilling a genuine need within schools and not as another tick mark for compliance within schools. Moreover change needs to be distinguishable from other similar reform efforts within the building; else change will be considered another ‘fad’ or trend, which will not last long.
- Findings emphasize that it is important for leaders prior to embarking on change or reform efforts to explain in great detail to their personnel the specific steps in the change management process and engage staff in the planning of change itself. Change management is a complex cultural process which takes time, hence providing a long-term orientation to employees regarding how change will unfold within their schools, enhancing their risk appetite for change, will lead to greater staff buy in and engagement in making change a reality.
- Open lines of communication must be maintained between leaders and the rest of their school staff, especially if leaders are catalyzing reform within schools. Leaders must walk the talk wherein their messaging needs to showcase to their employees that

change is here to stay. Emphasizing follow-through consistency with reform efforts, matching their expectations with requisite support and making staff believe that the change provides a fair due-process for student and staff alike, will lead to a more successful implementation and integration of reform within schools.

- Trainings and awareness building on reform efforts within the building must be perceived as adding significant value to employees existing knowledge, needs to be more detailed and not perfunctory and must very explicitly state the role of the employees in the change process. Given funds and timings are pertinent issues for training efforts, leaders need to be judicious about the way their employees seek training, through internal or external sources and effectively find a mechanism of building training supports. Such training and professional development activities within schools will make whole school change more of a reality within school buildings compared to change that is seen only as a prerogative of a few and is sequestered.
- As schools are currently operating in an era of New Public Management (Hood, 1995), with continued devolution and an increasing reliance on market alternatives to government provision, schools need to take a step back and understand the pressures they are operating under. School leadership need to be aware of the multiple environmental factors that inadvertently affect change reform within schools, such as larger neighborhood gentrification forces, mismatch in staff and student diversity (race and class dynamics), reduced school funding, staff attrition, leadership changes and depleting resources amongst others. Whilst it is unrealistic to expect school leadership to exercise tangible control with regards to the external environmental pressures, they must make strident efforts to legitimize the continuance and

maintenance of reform efforts within their building. For instance, schools can assess whether forming partnerships with CBOs are necessary for reform efforts because partnering for the sake of partnering will of not add value and create further discord within the school. Leaders can prepare prudent budgets for their reform efforts to signal that change will not go away with depleting resources. Participation of multiple personnel in the collective-decision making process for change will help in the long run. Matching student diversity with diversifying staff can go a long way with respect to countering issues of racial dynamics that are rampant within schools. These are some examples of the way leaders can counter accountability pressures they contend with whilst striving to bring about reform at schools.

Implications for CBOs partnering with schools

- CBOs' unflinching focus must be on quality and building their reputation of the services they have to offer, by virtue of having earned the expertise title at both the district level and at individual schools. Legitimacy is best garnered through such expertise and legitimacy and goes a long way in restoring their critical role as agents of change and reform. They need to continue to place pressure on the district and ensure follow-through of reform efforts, in many ways reverse the top-down accountability pressures as evidenced in the study.
- CBOs need to maintain a certain amount of flexibility in their operations since they should be sensitive and willing to adapt to the changing conditions within the school district that they are assisting. In doing so, CBOs should make sincere efforts towards understanding the pulse and direction of their partner school in order to avert the risk of their discontinuance.

- Open channels of communication need to be maintained between the CBOs and the administration at schools. Communication should be clear, frequent and prioritized to engage in a shared organizational mission. In addition, CBOs must make strident efforts to immerse themselves and mingle with multiple personnel in the building so that there are not only associated with the administration, especially in school contexts where distrust exists between the administration and other rungs of staff.
- While CBOs must capitalize on their existing relations they have developed with schools, such relations should not be taken for granted. At the end of the day, CBOs work and contribution must shine through in order for them to continue having a fruitful partnership with schools.

Limitations and directions for future research

One of the major shortcomings of this study was the cross sectional nature of the data collection process, wherein making sound conclusions with regards to the RJE integration and sustainability process is hard. Thus conducting a more longitudinal study of the effects of sound implementation of RJE will help understand what true institutionalization entails. In addition, given that I was not granted permission to gather immersive ethnographic observational data, by ‘hanging out’ and spending more time across all schools, I may have missed out on specific nuances surrounding how RJE affects the culture and climate at schools.

The district has been scrutinized in the past for its disproportionate expenditure on security measures, such as metal detectors and surveillance cameras and stationing security and police personnel within schools (VOYCE Report, July 2011)- all aspects that significantly contribute to the retributive approach that is dominant within schools. As the CPS SEL umbrella widens and incorporates the expansion of non-exclusionary strategies

within schools such as mental health, counseling, MTSS, BHT and RJE amongst others, it would be worthwhile to study the overarching district budgets on various expenditure brackets to truly understand whether RJE in conjunction with other SEL initiatives is moving away from its marginal status at schools. The current study did not capture such details and thus this poses as a limitation.

My study largely focused on understanding the service provider perspective on RJE, in terms of understanding how personnel at schools are implementing RJE. The service user, that is the voice of youth for whom this programming has been instated in the first place is missing. Future research can entail, observing RJE peace circles, peer jury sessions and conflict mediation processes to witness RJE's key values and tenants getting operationalized, and more importantly, gauge whether youth voice and participation is being prioritized as claimed by service providers. In this manner, the service users, that is gaining youth perspectives about the impact and effectiveness of RJE would be a wonderful addition to enhance our understanding of the interaction between service providers and service users.

Future research endeavors could compare and contrast RJE implementation and integration across varying schools contexts such as comparing charter schools versus public schools, comparing high schools to middle or elementary schools. As the RP coaching model is gaining prominence within the CPS district, it would be interesting to study what that would mean for the original whole school conception of RJE since this new model has been critiqued for lacking depth and redefining conflict within schools. Future research can assess a natural experimental situation within CPS by comparing and contrasting three school conditions, 1) schools that have assigned RP coaches, 2) school that do not have assigned RP coaches and are implementing a more holistic RJE approach, and 3) schools that have neither an RP coach nor a holistic RJE approach, perhaps schools that have just decided to adopt

RJE without fully understanding its potential. Such an experimental study will help the district decipher the true effects of its RP coaching model. In addition, being granted an opportunity to sit in on policy level decisions made by the Chicago Board of Education regarding the future of RJE for the district would be an insightful research endeavor.

Sitting through RJE training and professional development sessions held both at the district level and within schools, can help future researchers gather an understanding of what is taught about RJE to employees and at the same time, gauge employee reception to RJE training. Studies can examine the trainees' body language while they receive training, conduct focused group discussions with different rungs of school personnel or conduct a brief survey about the effectiveness of RJE training. Such findings can prove to be helpful to the district and training practitioners to maximize trainee satisfaction through a more thorough, rigorous understanding of RJE.

Community based initiatives such as the community-based RJ hubs are being installed to institutionalize the RJE paradigm across communities of color especially those that are being disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system as well as punitive, discriminatory school policies. CBOs are at the forefront of such community initiatives and believe that a link needs to be created between schools and the community with regards to RJE. Administrators themselves are unaware of the growth of such community initiatives. Hence such community initiatives appear to presently be a missed opportunity for schools to tap into additional resources, and more so extend student's learning about RJE processes beyond the school building. Thus practitioners and researchers can think of innovative mechanisms and ways to bring about a better link between schools and communities. Finally, with the de-centralization of decision making being entrusted to local school councils especially with regards to appointing new principals at schools, it would be interesting to

understand the local school councils take on RJE and whether belief in RJE is taken into consideration while appointing a new principal at the local school level.

Conclusion

RJE has historically maintained a marginal status within schools, wherein the dominant lens of handling matters of misbehavior and conflict is retributive justice. RJE is seeking to assist schools move away from a behavior management or control approach towards repairing harm and building relationships. According to Thorsborne & Blood (2013), for restorative practice to move towards mainstream acceptance, schools must ensure it meets and addresses a genuine need; that it does not come at a great risk to the majority; and that RJE becomes part of the language and ‘the way we do things’.

Drawing on four organizational theoretical perspectives, the study findings emphasize the important role played by CBOs in influencing the RJE adoption decisions at both the policy and the local school levels. Within schools, study findings show how crucial factors such as pioneering leadership, sound communication and invigorating a positive, relational culture are intimately tied to the successful implementation of RJE. During the RJE implementation stage, principals appear to be more crucial to the RJE reform process than the CBOs they work with whom they partner.

The RJE diffusion findings point to the fact that schools that have convinced a majority of its staff about the need and value of RJE are likely to diffuse RJE at a faster speed compared to the others. Schools which institutionalize RJE as a part of SEL compared to schools that integrate RJE as a part of discipline are more likely to contribute to the care ethos and nurture healthy school cultures, thereby ensuring long term sustainability of RJE. However, RJE has been unsuccessful at redefining the notions of policing and justice within schools since RJE implementation and integration intersects with complexities in the larger

institutional environment, precarity of school-CBO partnerships and instability and urban flux at play in schools. Thereby RJE has definitely moved away from the margins but it is still not the mainstream practice within schools, given it has been unable to fulfill its promise and potential especially towards marginalized communities of color.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A

Affiliated Community Partner Interview Protocol

Introduction: Hello and thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. My name is Aditi Das and I am a graduate student at the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago. I want to talk with you today about your understanding of Restorative Justice. Remember, you do not have to answer these questions. You can withdraw at any time if you would like, and you may skip over any question if you don't want to answer it.

1. Organizational Mandate Information and kind of RJ work

Rationale: Background of the organization

Before I begin, could you give me a brief description of the primary mandate and mission of your organization?

(Probes: Purpose, sources of funding, staffing, client/user groups, if not solely a RJ organization, when and did it begin providing RJ services)

2. RJ partnership with CPS

Rationale: Learn about the terms and conditions of partnerships

- How do/did you decide which schools to form RJ partnerships with?
(Probes: Are your RJ partnerships static, evolving? What kind of support did you receive from school principals?)
- How and when was the idea of restorative justice introduced to the various schools that you partner with?
(Probes: Was restorative justice initiated into the school(s) by your organization or did you enter the partnership subsequent to RJ introduction into the school(s)? Were you invited by the school as a RJ partner? CPS? Neighborhood/Community?)
- What according to you are the key factors that led up to a school's willingness/readiness to take on restorative practices?
- What is your relationship with the CPS central administrative office?

3. Adoption and Implementation of Restorative Justice in schools

Rationale: Delve into specifics around school procedures for adoption and subsequent implementation of restorative justice practices

- In general, what are the initial steps your organization takes when implementing restorative justice programs in high schools? Do these steps/approaches (within universal, targeted and intensive approaches) vary across schools and/or partnerships? (Probes: Assessment, report to partner, feedback, mutual decision on

approach to partnership, delineation of partner roles? Ease of adoption; hesitation; concerns)

- Are there primary challenges that your organization encounters when implementing restorative justice programs? Do these challenges differ across partners (schools, neighborhoods, etc.)?
- How do you define success when working with schools? What are the dimensions of success? Do they vary across schools, partners? Is there negotiation between your organization and the partner (school, community) on the dimensions of success? (Probe for accomplishments, timeline, etc. after they answer I might also probe for individual and institution level if they did not address both)
- How is your organization unique in its implementation of restorative justice practices within schools?
- Does your organization utilize the RJ hubs model? Explain.

Table A.1: Intensity of Restorative Justice Services within Chicago Public High Schools- To be filled by affiliated community partners

Partner HS	Year of partnership	Frequency of contact (Days/Hours per week)	RJ Strategy & Nature of RJ activities/practices (Refer to diagram and description below. Can check more than 1 item.			Peace Room Setup		Onsite Peace Room coordinators		Training details (#, duration)	Funding for RJ
			Universal	Targeted	Intensive	Y	N	Y	N		
Eg. Granite HS	1999	1 day, 4 hours		x	x		x		x	20, 3 hours	State of Illinois

Using Morrison’s Hierarchy of Restorative Responses (Morrison, 2004):

- **Universal level:** Targets all members of the school community so everyone develops social and emotional skills and learns to resolve conflicts in a respectful way. This is the culture change discussed later so that everyone is “walking the walk” and using restorative language and practices.
- **Targeted level:** Addresses any conflict that causes harm to others in the school or community. This often requires a third party to facilitate the model used, which could be anything from an informal circle or individual conference to a small group or classroom conference to repair the affected relationships.
- **Intensive level:** Includes the participation of a larger group from the school or community that have been affected, such as parents, family members, friends, social workers, or juvenile justice and probation officials. A family group conference, a series of circles involving everyone harmed in the community, or a formal victim-offender mediation may be used.

Levels of Organizational Integration Rubric (LOIR) Activity & Discussion³¹

Please review these descriptions of different levels of collaboration.

- One the response section at the bottom of the page, please fill out the name of the high school with which you are currently associated
- Using the scale provided, please indicate the extent to which you currently interact with each high school partner.

Table A.2: LOIR Matrix- To be filled by affiliated community partners

Independent (None) 0	Network 1	Cooperating 2		Partnering 3	Unifying 4
-No common purpose - Shared strategies and tasks don't exist - No shared leadership or decision making structures - Nonexistent or infrequent and unplanned inter-professional communication	-Identify and create a base of support and explore interests - Flexible structures and tasks; Roles not defined - Nonhierarchical, Flexible and informal - Communication among members is planned but infrequent; Little inter-professional conflict	-Identify mutual needs, but maintain separate identities -Member links are advisory in nature with distinct organizational missions -Nonhierarchical, low-stake decision making with facilitative leadership - Minimal inter-professional conflict; Communication among members is clear, but largely informal		-Organizations remain autonomous but reach mutual goals together - Strategies and tasks are developed and maintained - Central leadership group; Equal decision making - Communication system and informal information channels developed; High degree of commitment and investment; evidence of problem solving and productivity	- Unification or acquisition to form a single structure; relinquishment of autonomy to support coalition - A shared organizational mission - Strong, visible leadership; clear roles and responsibilities - Communication is clear, frequent and prioritized; possibility of inter-professional conflict is high
List of Partner High Schools	Independent 0	Network 1	Cooperating 2	Partnering 3	Unifying 4

³¹ LOIR is a modification of the Strategic Alliance Formative Assessment Rubric; see Gajda, R. (2004). Utilizing collaboration theory to evaluate strategic alliances. *American Journal of Evaluation*. 25, 1, 65-77

Appendix B: CBO-School MoU Samples

CHERRY CENTER

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING IMPLEMENTING RESTORATIVE PRACTICES INTO CPS

↳ SERVICES

Restorative Conversations

School staff are taught to use restorative questions, affective statements (e.g., "I" statements), and empathetic listening skills to communicate with students and each other in ways that promote greater understandings and harmony in the school. School staff will receive both professional development and coaching in restorative conversations.

Restorative Circles (AKA Talking Circles, Peace Circles, etc.)

Selected staff are trained to facilitate Restorative Circles and are paired with an experienced Circle Keeper to learn how and become proficient at helping students talk through and amicably resolve their issues. School staff will receive both professional development and coaching in Restorative Circles.

↳ EXPECTATIONS

OSEL Restorative Practices Coach Expectations

1. Conduct a Capacity and Needs Assessment of school's current capacity and areas of need related to the engagement and sustainability of Restorative Practices
2. Support school in developing an Action Plan to assist the school in engaging and sustaining Restorative Practices
3. Meet with the school's administration/ designee to determine the Restorative Practices into which the school wants to invest
4. Schedule a school-wide professional development on the Overview of Restorative Practices within Chicago Public Schools with school; submit training for uploading to The Learning Hub an on-site one-to-two hour PD for the entire school staff on Restorative Practices and Restorative Conversations
5. Facilitate the training of one-to-two select staff members as Circle Keepers (Restorative Practice Practitioners)
6. Meet with school staff to provide on-going coaching in their utilization of restorative conversations and practices within the school
7. Provide weekly in-classroom supports, such as modeling or observing check-in circles or talking circles
8. Meet weekly with the school's staff circle keepers to provide on-going coaching and honing of their skills as Circle Keepers and Restorative Practices within the school
9. Submit monthly reports of activities to OSEL for the assessment of service delivery
10. Attend OSEL PLC and other meetings as requested

School Expectations

1. Principal or designee attend a three-hour training on RP 101, which introduces a Restorative Practices philosophy and mindset
2. Schedule day/times for entire school staff to attend one-to-two hour PD or training on Restorative Conversations
3. Establish a referral system for students in need of more targeted SEL supports
4. Identify one-to-two selected staff members to be trained as Circle Keepers (Restorative Practice Practitioners)
5. Allow these one-to-two selected staff members to attend a two-day off-site Peace Circle training; staff will be trained as Circle Keepers
6. Assure that trained staff are afforded time to provide weekly at least one circle with the Restorative Practice coach each semester

7. Include Restorative Practices coaches in regularly scheduled, e.g., grade level, meetings to increase availability of consultation on the use of restorative conversations and practices within the school and classrooms
8. Set aside a confidential (and ample size) space for the Restorative Practices coach to engage in restorative conversations with the individual or small groups of students, for example, a Peace Room
9. Provide the Restorative Practices coach with access to a phone and computer, and the means to make photocopies if necessary
10. Enter all actions taken that include Restorative Practices data into IMPACT
11. Allow three to four trained staff to attend end-of semester PLC offsite

↓ SERVICE

Optional: Peer Conferencing (AKA Peer Jury)

Select students are taught to use Restorative Conversations to help fellow students talk through and amicably resolve their issues. Select staff are trained to supervise these students.

↓ EXPECTATIONS

OSEL RP Coach Expectations

1. Schedule trainings for students and adult advisors to be trained as Peer Conference members and advisors
2. Provide newly-trained Peer Conference members with regular opportunities to practice with their Peer Conference Advisors to hone their newly acquired skills
3. Provide newly trained Peer Conference Advisors with on-going coaching in their utilization and coaching of restorative conversations and practices with the Peer Conference members

School Expectations

1. Select 6-8 students to attend half-day training on Peer Conference
2. Identify at least one staff member to serve as an advisor to Peer Conference members
3. Set aside a confidential (and ample size) space for the Restorative Practices coach to engage in restorative conversations with individual or small groups of students
4. Enter all actions taken that include Restorative Practices data into IMPACT
5. Allow trained staff to attend end-of-semester PLC offsite

Accepted Interventions in Focus School

- Restorative Conversations** (using restorative strategies in everyday communications with students and other and **Restorative Circles (AKA Peace Circles)**)
- Peer Conferencing (AKA Peer Jury)**

***If after 10 weeks of working together either party is unable to meet the agreed upon expectations, services will be discontinued.*

Approved by:

Director, Office of SEL

[Signature]
Principal (please sign and print name)

RP Coach

Date: 3/24/16

Date: _____

(Taken from Memorandum of Understanding, Chicago Public Schools- Office of Social and Emotional Learning)

DYNAMIC CENTER

Seminar Partnership Agreement
2015-2016

School Partner: HS

Partnership Component	What Umoja provides	What we need from you
Increase school's capacity to support students' grade-level and postsecondary success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [redacted] staff person 20 hours/week to build schoolwide postsecondary culture • Lead efforts to increase staff and school community buy in toward postsecondary readiness metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Seminar course time and teacher, who effectively implements an experiential curriculum that encompasses SEL content, academic check-ins, and community building • Counseling team/counselor and seminar teacher who work together to look at relevant data to inform the focus of academic check-ins, curriculum implementation, and/or appropriate postsecondary planning • School/grade level teams that effectively engage in data-based decision-making to inform appropriate interventions that enhance postsecondary readiness and general culture in the school • Administrative leaders that publicly support and message the seminar goals by providing leadership and guidance for the work of the relevant school/grade-level teams • Please be aware that [redacted] staff is required to attend mandatory [redacted] staff meetings and trainings throughout the summer and academic year. Additionally, [redacted] staff reserve the right to schedule personal vacation time and/or take personal or sick days as appropriate throughout the year. [redacted] staff will provide reasonable notice to the school partner, prior to any time off being taken by [redacted] staff. • The school partner should notify [redacted] of any changes to agreed upon dates, times and scheduled meetings at least 24 hours in advance. All original charges and costs for time will apply if the date, time or schedule is altered due to no fault of [redacted] (e.g. meeting delays, time being shortened, etc.).
Intensive Social & Emotional Learning, Postsecondary, and Curriculum coaching for Seminar Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-weekly coaching meetings • Frequent (at least bi-weekly) Seminar co-facilitation with teachers • Quarterly PLC for all partner school Seminar teachers to reflect and exchange best practices • Monthly review of Academic Check-In and Postsecondary/Relevant Grade Level Data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of high quality Seminar teacher candidates with final decision in consultation with the [redacted] team • Meet with Seminar teachers so they are aware of the coaching and know it is an expectation of their role in the upcoming year; connect with REACH focus domains • Commitment to have Seminar teacher(s) meet bi-weekly with [redacted] for coaching • Encourage Seminar teacher(s) to attend quarterly evening PLC • Regularly review curriculum pacing guide for alignment to school goals
Collaboration with Counseling Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal professional development/coaching for counseling staff, as needed • Bi-weekly planning and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated meeting time for relevant [redacted] staff, Counseling Team, and Seminar teachers • Regularly review curriculum pacing guide for alignment to school goals • Access to relevant data for school team and [redacted] staff to

DYNAMIC CENTER

	<p>data review meetings</p>	<p>inform strategic decision-making and course corrections if/as needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage counselors to support Academic Check-In Days weekly and co-facilitate lessons with Seminar teachers at least once a month
<p>School/Grade Level Team (PLT, FOT, grade level teams, etc)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation and thought leadership at meetings Support of team initiatives and projects Assistance in interpreting relevant school data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify team members and structure for ensuring implementation and coordination (also see Summer Institute) Attend team meetings regularly Time for team to present at opening and closing school year PDs Time for team to present at other PDs during school year Access to relevant data for team to review
<p>Administrative leadership and Influence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead quarterly meetings for relevant teams to discuss progress and next steps towards creating a postsecondary culture Influence in curriculum pacing based on schoolwide goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify staff of and attend quarterly meetings Identify staff people to enter and track data Follow up with staff, as needed to ensure data systems are being utilized Bi-weekly check-in meetings with staff (may be less frequent 2nd semester)
<p>Data access, data-informed decision-making and outcomes tracking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data tracking system for ongoing data collection & analysis Assistance aligning school data systems w/ the data tracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular access to relevant student level data for all student participants (e.g. school data systems, Dashboard, Naviance, etc.) Identify school staff/team to track agreed upon primary outcomes (e.g. early college indicators, etc.) Commitment to utilizing data on a regular basis to inform decision making
<p>Spring strategic planning and University summer institute</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring visioning and strategic planning session leading to customized school goals for building a postsecondary culture and increasing metrics Intensive week-long summer training and guided planning for school year implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify cross-section of school stakeholders to provide input through the Spring strategic planning session (3 hours in May or June) Identify core team (Seminar teachers, counselors, and relevant grade-level stakeholders who will be owning the work during the school year) to attend University Notify team of their role on the team Meet with team once prior and once after to set goals for school year Attend one day of

Signature

Date

Signature [Principal/Partner]

Date

[Handwritten signature] 9-29-15

9/29/15

DYNAMIC CENTER

Task Order
Social Emotional Learning Services
Board Report

School Name: High School
Provider Name: [Redacted]
CPS Contact: [Redacted] **Phone:** [Redacted] **Email:** [Redacted]
Period of Performance: 1 July 2015 (start date) through 30 June 2016 (end date)
Maximum compensation for this Task Order: [Redacted]

This Task Order is subject to the terms and conditions of the Master Agreement for Social Emotional Learning Services (the "Master Agreement") between [Redacted] (the "Provider") and the Board of Education of the City of Chicago (the "Board"), commonly known as the Chicago Public Schools ("CPS"). Defined terms in this Task Order have the same meanings as those ascribed to those terms in the Master Agreement or the Scope of Services attached as Exhibit A to the Master Agreement (the "Scope of Services").

1. Description of Specific Services to be furnished by Provider:

[Redacted] staff person an average of 20 hours/week to provide Restorative Justice supports and practices including Peace Room operations, staff professional development and support with discipline systems and structures.

[Redacted] staff person an average of 20 hours/week to provide social emotional learning supports to 9th and 12th grade seminar and post-secondary supports.

2. Activities and Deliverables with Specific Deadlines:

Activities and Deliverables	Delivery/Performance Dates
University strategic planning meetings & creation of customized supports for High School's participation in University, including analysis of survey results	July 2015
University Summer Institute, including professional development workshops and customized planning with a [Redacted] a facilitator	July 27 th – July 30 th 2015
On-site Discipline and Restorative Justice Support: a. [Redacted] staff person (average of 20 hours per week for 40 weeks) b. Peace Room set up and implementation c. ISS/ISPD curriculum access and revision including coaching, support, and modeling d. School data & systems analysis to make informed decisions around discipline and behavior e. Responding to student discipline & climate issues via small group session f. Targeted Quarterly Professional	August 1 st – June 30 th 2015

DYNAMIC CENTER

Task Order
Social Emotional Learning Services
Board Report

Development for ISS and Discipline teams (including security) on a series of restorative justice topics	
On site social emotional learning and post-secondary support a. Staff person (average of 20 hours per week for 40 weeks) b. Ongoing curriculum and coaching support for 9 th and 12 th grade seminar teachers c. Participation on grade level teams as they apply to 9 th grade seminar d. Participation and support of Post-Secondary Leadership team and post-secondary events e. Seminar teacher participation in Fellowship for Educational Excellence professional development	August 1 st – June 30 th 2015

3. Books and Materials:

4. **Total Maximum Compensation.** Compensation hereunder is subject to the provisions of the Master Agreement. The Total Maximum Compensation for Services (including books and materials) under this Task Order must not exceed the amounts set forth above. Any Services that would cause the compensation to exceed the Total Maximum Compensation require a written amendment to this Task Order before those Services are furnished by the Provider. *It is Provider's responsibility to monitor its Services to ensure that the cost of the Services does not exceed the amount specified in the governing Purchase Order and this Task Order.*

5. **Approved Services Only: Signature.** This Task Order may include only Services under the category or categories of Services for which Provider has been approved in the Scope of Services. This Task Order shall not take effect until it has been signed i) by Provider's authorized representative, (ii) the School Principal and (iii) by the Board Project Manager or designee.

Authorized signatures:

Provider:
 Signature: _____
 Printed name: _____

School Principal:
 Signature: _____
 Printed name: _____

Board:
 Signature: _____
 Printed name: _____

Appendix C

Central District Office Personnel Interview Guide

Introduction: Hello and thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. My name is Aditi Das and I am a graduate student at the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

I am broadly interested in learning about how disciplinary policies and school culture impact youth. I am curious to learn about how Chicago Public High Schools deal with disciplinary infractions in all its forms, that includes school detentions, in and out- -of-school suspensions, expulsions, arrests and possible alternatives to discipline such as restorative justice. Remember, you do not have to answer these questions. You can withdraw at any time you like, and you may skip over any question if you don't want to answer it.

- Before I begin, could you give me a brief description of your primary role within CPS?
- In what way did CPS incorporate/embrace restorative justice? (Probe: When and how?)
- What is the process of partnering with school? (Probe: Who goes to whom first)
- How is restorative justice different from other CPS SEL initiatives?
- What are some of the key challenges or barriers you face while attempting to advocate for restorative justice in schools?
- What do you think has gone well in implementing restorative justice?
- In what manner, is restorative justice impacting students, teaching staff and non-teaching staff?
- Do you see an even implementation of restorative justice programming across all schools?
- In what manner is CPS supporting restorative justice expansion within schools?
- What do you believe the long-term prospects of restorative justice are?

Appendix D

Interview protocols for various school personnel within each school

Interview Guide for Chicago Public School Principals/ Assistant Principals/ Deans

Introduction: Hello and thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. My name is Aditi Das and I am a graduate student at the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

I am broadly interested in learning about how disciplinary policies and school culture impact youth. I am curious to learn about how your school deals with disciplinary infractions within your school in all its forms, that includes school detentions, in and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, arrests and possible alternatives to discipline such as restorative justice. Remember, you do not have to answer these questions. You can withdraw at any time you like, and you may skip over any question if you don't want to answer it.

1. Personnel Information

Rationale: Background of the professional

- Before I begin, could you give me a brief description of your role within the school and how long you have been in this position?

2. School culture and climate assessment

Rationale: Learn about the norms and general atmosphere of the school

- How would you describe the general climate of your school?
- How does it “feel” to be a student here? How about for staff members?
- How would you describe the interpersonal relations amongst staff as well as between staff and students?
- How involved are families in the life of the school? Have you taken any specific steps to include them?

3. School safety and discipline strategies

Rationale: Learning about the school's philosophy regarding school discipline

- What is your personal philosophy regarding the role of school discipline?
- In what way is your personal philosophy, the same or different than the culture of this school around discipline?
- How does your school approach discipline?
- Do you believe the current school disciplinary approach is fair?
- Is the current school discipline approach enforced?
- How many students have been suspended (in and out-of-school suspension)?

Expelled? Arrested? In the past school year?

NOTE (In the event the participant does not speak about Restorative Justice practices- I will probe them on more details in the following section): One of the things that I am interested in is restorative justice, but I want to understand it within a constellation of other practices that are currently in place at your school.

4. Implementation and sustainability of restorative justice programming

Rationale: Delve into specifics around school implementation of restorative justice practices and gauge it's long term prospects

- Are you familiar with what I mean by restorative justice?
- Walk us through what happened when restorative justice was first introduced at <insert school name>. (Probes: Staff buy-in; Timeline for change; Training details)
- Tell us what a typical day or a typical week looks like with respect to restorative justice programming at your school.
- How is restorative justice programming being funded within your school?
- In your opinion, how is restorative justice distinctive from other CPS SEL initiatives such as PBIS, Champs, Boystown amongst others?
- Have you been trained in restorative justice practices? If so, what kind of training did you undergo? (Probes: When, where, how intense?)
- Who carries out restorative practices at this school?
- What is the usual demographic of students who are engaged in restorative justice practices?
- What have been the main challenges in implementing restorative justice?
- What do you think has gone well in implementing restorative justice?
- In what manner, is restorative justice impacting students, teaching staff and non-teaching staff?
- How is the neighborhood/community involved with RJ within schools?
- Are you aware of the community restorative justice hubs model? If so, in what manner are you associated with them?
- Do you believe that there is a shared perception among all the school employees regarding the significance of restorative justice programming?
- What, in your opinion, are the long-term prospects of restorative justice in schools like yours?

Interview Guide for Chicago Public School Teachers/ School counselors/ School social workers

Introduction: Hello and thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. My name is Aditi Das and I am a graduate student at the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

I am broadly interested in learning about how disciplinary policies and school culture impact youth. I am curious to learn about how your school deals with disciplinary infractions within your school in all its forms, that includes school detentions, in and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, arrests and possible alternatives to discipline such as restorative justice. Remember, you do not have to answer these questions. You can withdraw at any time you like, and you may skip over any question if you don't want to answer it.

1. Personnel Information

Rationale: Background of the professional

- Before I begin, could you give me a brief description of your role within the school and how long you have been in this position?

2. School culture and climate assessment

Rationale: Learn about the norms and general atmosphere of the school

- How would you describe the general psychological climate of your school?
- How does it “feel” to be a student here? How about for staff members?
- How would you describe the interpersonal relations amongst staff as well as between staff and students?
- How involved are families in the life of the school? Have you taken any specific steps to include them?

3. School safety and discipline strategies

Rationale: Learning about the school's philosophy regarding school discipline

- What is your personal philosophy regarding the role of school discipline?
- In what way is your personal philosophy, the same or different than the culture of this school around discipline?
- What according to you is your school's approach to discipline?
- How fair do you believe the current school disciplinary approach is?
- To what extent is the current school discipline approach enforced?
- How many students have been suspended (in and out-of-school suspension)? Expelled? Arrested? In the past school year?

NOTE (In the event the participant does not speak about Restorative Justice practices- I will probe them on more details in the following section): One of the things that I am interested in is restorative justice, but I want to understand it within a constellation of other practices that are currently in place at your school.

4. Implementation of Restorative Justice and it's sustainability

Rationale: Delve into specifics of the implementation of restorative justice practices within the school and it's long-term prospects

- Are you familiar with what I mean by restorative justice?
- Walk me through what happened when restorative justice was first introduced at <insert school name> (Probes: Personnel buy in process; change management)
- In your opinion, why did your school embrace restorative justice programming?
- Tell me about what a typical day or a typical week looks like with respect to restorative justice programming.
- Have you been trained in restorative justice practices? If so, what kind of training did you undergo? (Probes: When, where, how intense?)
- Have your day-to-day responsibilities changed post restorative justice implementation? In what way? (Probes: Additional workload; pressures?)
- What is the usual demographic of students who are engaged in RJ practices?
- Which student referrals go down the restorative route and which go down the traditional route?
- Who carries out restorative practices in this school?
- What have been the main challenges in implementing restorative justice?
- What do you think has gone well in implementing restorative justice?
- In what way is RJ impacting students, teaching staff and administrative staff?
- How is the neighborhood/community involved with RJ within schools?
- Do you believe that there is a shared perception among all the school employees regarding the significance of restorative justice programming?
- What are the long-term prospects of restorative justice at this school?

Interview Guide for Chicago Public School Restorative Justice/Peace Coordinators

Introduction: Hello and thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. My name is Aditi Das and I am a graduate student at the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

I am broadly interested in learning about how disciplinary policies and school culture impact youth. I am curious to learn about how your school deals with disciplinary infractions within your school in all its forms, that includes school detentions, in and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, arrests and possible alternatives to discipline such as restorative justice. Remember, you do not have to answer these questions. You can withdraw at any time you like, and you may skip over any question if you don't want to answer it.

1. Personnel Information

Rationale: Background of the professional

- Before I begin, could you give me a brief description of your role within the school and how long you have been in this position?

2. School culture and climate assessment

Rationale: Learn about the norms and general atmosphere of the school

- How would you describe the general psychological climate at this school?
- How would you describe the interpersonal relations amongst staff as well as between staff and students?

3. Duties & Responsibilities

Rationale: Understand their role and need

- How did the school go about hiring you? (Probes: Commissioned through community partner? Advertisement?)
- What kind of training have you undergone in restorative practices? (Probes: Quality, duration)
- What kind of experience do you have in restorative practices?
- How many days in a week do you function?
- Which organization are you an employee of?
- Could you describe what your job looks like on a typical day at school?
- Where within the school premises do you work? (Probes: Peace room? Office?)
- Do have any interactions with the community partner? If so, in what capacity?
- Do you work in conjunction with other school and administrative staff? If so, in what capacity?

4. Implementation and sustainability of Restorative Justice

Rationale: Delve into specifics of the implementation of restorative justice practices within the school and it's long term prospects

- Without specifying any details, could you describe what a typical incident of a student violation of the school's disciplinary code, looks like within your school?
- What are the most common types of discipline problems that you come across?
- What are the most serious types of discipline problems that you come across?
- What do most of the restorative practices look like within the school? (Probes: Peer juries; peer circles; re-entry circles)
- Could you describe what activities take place within the peace room? (Probes: How and when is the space utilized?)
- What is the usual demographic of students who are engaged in restorative justice practices?
- Which student referrals go down the restorative route and which go down the traditional route?
- How invested is the school management in bringing about restorative justice implementation?
- Who carries out restorative practices at this school?
- What have been the main challenges in implementing restorative justice?
- What do you think has gone well in implementing restorative justice?
- In what way is RJ impacting students, teaching staff and administrative staff?
- How is the neighborhood/community involved with RJ within schools?
- Do you believe that there is a shared perception among all the school employees regarding the significance of restorative justice programming?
- What are the long-term prospects of restorative justice at this school?

Interview Guide for Chicago Public School Safety & Security Personnel/ In-school Police Officers

Introduction: Hello and thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. My name is Aditi Das and I am a graduate student at the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

I am broadly interested in learning about how disciplinary policies and school culture impact youth. I am curious to learn about how your school deals with disciplinary infractions within your school in all its forms, that includes school detentions, in and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, arrests and possible alternatives to discipline such as restorative justice. Remember, you do not have to answer these questions. You can withdraw at any time you like, and you may skip over any question if you don't want to answer it.

1. Personnel Information

Rationale: Background of the professional

- Before I begin, could you give me a brief description of your role within the school and how long you have been in this position?

2. School culture and climate assessment

Rationale: Learn about the norms and general atmosphere of the school

- How would you describe the general psychological climate of your school?
- How does it “feel” to be a student here? How about for staff members?
- How would you describe the interpersonal relations amongst staff as well as between staff and students?

3. School safety and disciplinary strategies

Rationale: Understand the school discipline philosophy

- What according to you is your school's approach to discipline?
- How fair do you believe the current school disciplinary approach is?
- To what extent is the current school discipline approach enforced?
- Are there any exceptions made?
- What are the most frequent types of discipline problems that you come across?
- What are the most serious types of discipline problems that you come across?
- Without specifying any details, could you describe what a typical incident of a student violation of the school's disciplinary code, looks like within your school?
- How many students have been suspended (in and out-of-school suspension)? Expelled? Arrested? In the past school year?

4. Knowledge about RJ

Rationale: Gauge their RJ awareness levels

- Are you familiar with what I mean by restorative justice?
- If yes, when and where did you learn about the concept?
- What did you initially think about it?
- What kinds of restorative practices are being implemented in school?
- Who carries out restorative practices at the school?
- Are you aware of the peace room?
- What kinds of activities take place in the peace room?
- Have you received any kind of restorative justice training? If so, please provide details.
- Have your work responsibilities changes post restorative justice implementation?
- Do you believe that there is a shared perception among all the school employees regarding the significance of restorative justice programming?
- What are the long term prospects of restorative programming at this school?

Interview Guide for Lunchroom Managers, Custodial and Chief Engineers

Introduction: Hello and thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. My name is Aditi Das and I am a graduate student at the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

I am broadly interested in learning about how disciplinary policies and school culture impact youth. I am curious to learn about how your school deals with disciplinary infractions within your school in all its forms, that includes school detentions, in and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, arrests and possible alternatives to discipline such as restorative justice. Remember, you do not have to answer these questions. You can withdraw at any time you like, and you may skip over any question if you don't want to answer it.

1. Personnel Information

Rationale: Background of the professional

- Before I begin, could you give me a brief description of your role within the school and how long you have been in this position?

2. School culture and climate assessment

Rationale: Learn about the norms and general atmosphere of the school

- How would you describe the general psychological climate of your school?
- How does it “feel” to be a student here? How about for staff members?
- How would you describe the interpersonal relations amongst staff as well as between staff and students?

3. School safety and disciplinary strategies

Rationale: Understand the school discipline philosophy

- What is your personal philosophy regarding the role of school discipline?
- In what way is your personal philosophy, the same or different than the culture of this school around discipline?
- What according to you is your school's approach to discipline?
- How fair do you believe the current school disciplinary approach is?
- To what extent is the current school discipline approach enforced?
- Are there any exceptions made?
- What are the most frequent types of discipline problems that you come across?
- What are the most serious types of discipline problems that you come across?
- Without specifying any details, could you describe what a typical incident of a student violation of the school's disciplinary code, looks like within your school?
- How many students have been suspended (in and out-of-school suspension)? Expelled? Arrested? In the past school year?

4. Knowledge about RJ

Rationale: Gauge their RJ awareness levels

- Are you familiar with what I mean by restorative justice?
- If yes, when and where did you learn about the concept?
- What did you initially think about it?
- What kinds of restorative practices are being implemented at your school?
- Who carries out restorative practices at the school?
- Are you aware of the peace room?
- What kinds of activities take place in the peace room?
- Have you received any kind of restorative justice training? If so, please provide details.
- Have your work responsibilities changed post restorative justice implementation?
- Do you believe that there is a shared perception among all the school employees regarding the significance of restorative justice programming?
- What are the long-term prospects of restorative justice programming at this school?

Appendix E

Sample of Westshore Handbook

WESTSHORE HIGH SCHOOL - INTERNAL HANDBOOK

- ✓ Walk around the room. Spend a minimum amount of time at your desk or at the front of the room.
- ✓ Communicate the learning objectives of each lesson so students understand what they are learning and why it is important.
- ✓ Strive to motivate students through enthusiasm, encouragement, and praise.
- ✓ Connect with individual students on personal level, take time to focus on two different students each class period.
- ✓ Reinforce positive behavior

Teachers will discuss expectations and procedures with their classes and post the expectations in a visible location in the classroom. Teachers will also explain the consequences that occur if expectations are not met, such as: phone calls home, staying after school, or removal from activities. See Appendix #9 for specific interventions that may assist in classroom management.

All corrections to student behavior should be:

- **Calm:** Model the responsible way to deal with conflict, don't escalate emotions.
- **Consistent:** Correct unacceptable behaviors everytime they occur, no matter who does it and what time of day. This shows you are fair and reduces limit testing.
- **Brief:** State your expectation and give the student time to comply- this reduces disruption and avoids reinforcing negative behavior with attention.
- **Respectful:** Do not belittle or humiliate. Give correction in private when possible.

Disciplinary Progression Chart

The following chart should guide teacher interventions and Deans office support. Students that are sent out of class for Dean support will be escorted back to class if the procedures below are not followed. Students may not be sent to the Deans office unescorted or with a pass.

Level 1 Violations

- These are classroom management issues that teachers will handle during or after class. Students should not receive a referral to the Dean's Office for these infractions.
- Teacher will record any intervention attempted in Verify Student Logger.

Offense	Suggested Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unprepared for class • Inappropriate/offensive language with another student • Interrupting class • Academic dishonesty • Sleeping in Class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal redirection and reminder of school policy. • Reassign seat (eg. away from friends, closer to teacher). • Short conversation with student to check in on behavior. • Phone call home.

WESTSHORE HIGH SCHOOL - INTERNAL HANDBOOK

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic device in classroom or hallway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal reminder to put away and reminder of school-wide "no electronics during school time" policy. (eg. "No phones at during the school day. You know the rules.") If a student is in class and the issues repeats itself, creating a contract where the student checks their phone in, or the teacher for the remainder of class holds it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dress policy violation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional and alternative clothing is in the Dean's Office and must be worn. Consistent violation of the dress code will result in a call home by the Dean's Office and/or a parent conference.

Level 2 Violations

- When situations escalate to the point where classroom instruction cannot continue, call the main office for Security and refer the student to the Dean's Office. Security will escort the student to 105.
 - After a brief description of the incident to security, the teacher will log the incident in Student Logger that same day.
 - Do not send a student to the Dean's Office without a security officer escorting them.

Offense	1 st Consequence	Re-entry Plan	2 nd Consequence	Re-entry Plan	3 rd Consequence	Re-entry Plan
Student is disrespectful to teacher or other students to the extent that classroom instruction cannot continue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record in Student Logger. Restorative Consequence in classroom (lunchtime detention to help grade quizzes, clean whiteboards, collate papers, etc.) 	Teacher and student engage in one-on-one discussion to identify problems, find possible solutions, and create a restorative consequence that matches violation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record in Student Logger. Call security if there is a threat to safety Restorative Consequence in Dean's Office. 	Student completes a reflection sheet for classroom teacher. Student creates restorative intervention with Dean's Office. Dean's Office calls home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record in Student Logger. Call security if there is a threat to safety. Refer to Dean's Office 	Meeting with Dean, teacher, student, and parent.
Repeated use of electronic device after reminders, and defiance of teacher interventions						

WESTSHORE HIGH SCHOOL - INTERNAL HANDBOOK

Repeat of any problem from Level 1 after reminders.						
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Level 3 Violations

- **Teacher calls directly for security** and completes a referral in *Student Logger* that same day. Security will escort the student to the Deans Office. The Dean will follow through with discipline action.

Offense	Consequence
Physical fight with another student(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call security immediately. • Record in Student Logger ASAP • Dean will address disciplinary consequences.
Gang tagging or representation	
Cursing directly at an adult. Example: "F*ck you, Mrs. ___." On the other hand, something like "F*ck this class/work" should be handled in class.	
Alcohol/drug use	
Bullying Bullying is defined as: Any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students, that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the following effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property; • Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health; • Substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or • Substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges provided by a school. 	

Appendix F

RJE Impact Data for Sunshine and Westshore High Schools

Table A.3: RJE Impact Data at Sunshine High School

Sunshine	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
# of School Incidents	757	417	421	449
# of Misconducts	973	655	680	829
# of Suspensions	472	134	76	67
% Suspensions used per Incident	62.3%	32.1%	18.1%	14.9%
% Suspensions used per Misconduct	48.5%	20.1%	11.2%	8.2%
Average Length of Suspension (days)	3.8	2.31	2.12	2.10
% School RJ Practices Used	38%	69%	89%	91%
Attendance Rates	80.2%	85.1%	90.6%	88.6% (est.)

Table A.4: RJE Impact Data at Westshore High School

Actions	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
In-School Suspension	253	26	93
Out of School Suspension	527	173	41
Peer Jury/ Council	72	67	52

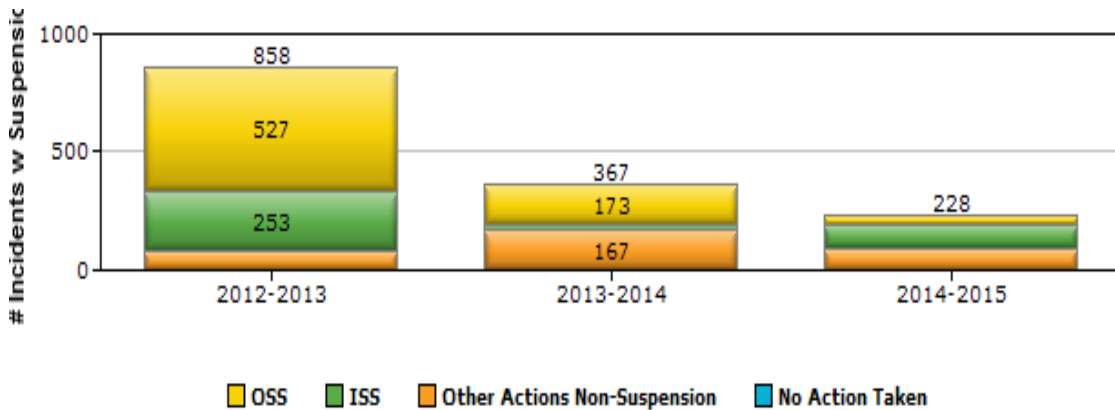


Figure A.1: School Discipline Impact Data at Westshore High School

Appendix G

Snapshot of Timber High School's Verify Logger

Suspension Type Name	Location	Action Type Name	Infraction Date	Infraction Time	Infraction Group	Infraction Description	OSS Start Date	OSS Return Date	OSS Suspension Days	ISS Start Date	ISS Return Date
In School Suspension	Classroom	Restorative Conversations	05/02/2016	13:30:00	Group 1	"1-05 Failing to attend class without a valid excuse"				05/04/2016	05/05/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom,Hallway	Restorative Conversations	05/19/2016	13:30:00	Group 1	"1-05 Failing to attend class without a valid excuse"				05/20/2016	05/23/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom,Hallway	Restorative Conversations	05/19/2016	13:30:00	Group 1	"1-05 Failing to attend class without a valid excuse"				05/20/2016	05/23/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom,Hallway	Restorative Conversations	05/19/2016	13:30:00	Group 1	"1-05 Failing to attend class without a valid excuse"				05/20/2016	05/23/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom,Hallway	Restorative Conversations	05/19/2016	13:30:00	Group 1	"1-05 Failing to attend class without a valid excuse"				05/20/2016	05/23/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom,Hallway	Restorative Conversations	05/19/2016	13:30:00	Group 3	"3-05 Second or more documented violation of a Group 1 or 2 behavior category"				05/20/2016	05/23/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom,Hallway	Restorative Conversations	05/19/2016	13:30:00	Group 3	"3-05 Second or more documented violation of a Group 1 or 2 behavior category"				05/20/2016	05/23/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom,Hallway	Restorative Conversations	05/19/2016	13:30:00	Group 3	"3-05 Second or more documented violation of a Group 1 or 2 behavior category"				05/20/2016	05/23/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom		01/08/2016	08:00:00	Group 3	"3-05 Second or more documented violation of a Group 1 or 2 behavior category"				01/15/2016	01/19/2016
In School Suspension	Classroom,Hallway	Restorative Conversations	05/19/2016	13:30:00	Group 3	"3-05 Second or more documented violation of a Group 1 or 2 behavior category"				05/20/2016	05/23/2016

Appendix H

Sample of Sunshine's Peace Room Report

Peace Room Staff Member: _____ Case #: _____

PEACE ROOM REPORT

Date: _____ Time/Period: _____ Peace Room Referral By: _____

Related to Prior Physical Altercation?: Yes No

TYPE OF CONFLICT:	
<input type="checkbox"/> PEER	<input type="checkbox"/> PERSONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SCHOOL	<input type="checkbox"/> STAFF/STUDENT

RESTORATIVE INTERVENTION PROVIDED:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Restorative Conversation	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Building Circle
<input type="checkbox"/> Peace Circle	<input type="checkbox"/> Talking Circle
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff/Student Mediation	<input type="checkbox"/> Healing Conversation/Circle
<input type="checkbox"/> Re-Entry Conversation	<input type="checkbox"/> Celebration Circle
<input type="checkbox"/> Re-Entry Circle	

STUDENTS INVOLVED: *Please list names of ALL involved (use back if needed).*

STUDENT NAME	SCC CODE	# DAYS ISS/OSS AVOIDED

CHOOSE FROM: *Ally, Participant, Co-Facilitation, Modeling, Thought-Partner, Observation*

STAFF NAME	INVOLVEMENT

NARRATIVE: *Writing case narrative here is optional. Narratives MUST be captured in the "Notes" section of the Excel Tracker.*

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