



Kyonna Hardy- Restorative Justice Executive

I have always known that being an educator was my life's purpose. I started my teaching career at 8yrs old, with my stuffed animals and Barbies. After graduating and receiving my Teachers' Credential from CSUDH, I began teaching high school English in 2008. However, it was not until I became grade level lead teacher and apart of the Positive Behavior Support committee at a Pilot school, after five years of teaching, that I truly realized my real purpose.

This current school year marks my tenth year working as an educator within LAUSD, having worked both at traditional and Pilot schools. Having had the privilege to work at both types of institutions allowed me access to differing structural models of discipline as well as leadership; thus giving me a deeper understanding of what works and what may not. At the Pilot school, the leadership model was distributive, which placed me in positions that required designing and facilitating several professional developments for the entire staff in regards to behavioral support. With the support and collaboration of two other colleagues who served on PBS, we were able to introduce models of discipline that focused on more restorative practices so that students, staff, and parents, began to develop a sense of community and obligation to one another. Our committee was provided PD time several times each semester to teach, promote, and practice interventions and support that were to be used as school-wide models, such as the PRIDE campaign which has later developed into the Phoenix Ps, as well as within individual classrooms, starting with community building activities.

Knowing how important it is to make sure that the adults on campus "buy into" proposed models of discipline, especially for those that are uncomfortable or hesitant with change, I made sure to model desired behaviors starting with my own team. As grade level lead, I worked with my team to develop a multi-tiered approach to respond to discipline issues that was rooted in restorative ideology. The first step was a preventive method, which focused on community building. Within my own classroom, as well as Advisory, students engaged in activities and circles that helped them build relationships and make connections. Setting a strong foundation in community building and restoring the socio-emotional side of our students is the only way to have an effective discipline model because soon the students will start to self-monitor themselves, not because they fear punishment, but because it is now apart of their internalized obligation to their community. Of course, self-monitoring with minimal intervention by adults is the ideal outcome, but while on that journey, other approaches to discipline issues such as reflection forms, circles, mediation, research assignments, positive reinforcement, and/or campaigns are effective in establishing a community where each person feels responsible to one another.

My philosophy and focus as a teacher has always been to make students better human beings. Each day I make sure to cater to the "human" part of them as well as the academic. There are so many ideas, activities, and plans that I have for our young people to help them navigate life and make an impact on the world. The evidence that my work has had a positive effect on

creating a safe, positive school culture, walk the hallways of the pilot school I worked at and at the school sites I service now everyday: my students. Just as much as their academic skills require attention, building their moral character and understanding of the world in a relevant and authentic way, to me, are also the keys to success. And at the foundation of my work are and have always been Restorative ideals such as: Community, Trust, Compassion, Empathy, and Building Relationships. It is these restorative practices and ideals that shape me as an educator. As a human being. And for the rest of my days I plan on spreading this passion, love, and expertise so that every person can be their best selves.