

### What Are Restorative Practices?



A restorative practice relies on the basic notion that people are connected through a web of relationships and when harm occurs between people, the web of relationships which creates a community is torn.



These practices have been proven to dramatically improve school culture and climate resulting in declines in student suspensions, expulsions, arrests, office referrals, and chronic absence, as well as improved academic performance, and teacher retention, thus, strengthening the tenets of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

### Barriers in Public Schools

From 2020-2023, the number of students who withdrew from Maryland public schools and whose "whereabouts [were] unknown" rose from 7,203 to 9,981, a 38% increase.

The four year cohort dropout rate increased to 8.5% from 7.4%. Moreover in 2022, Black students have a 8.5% dropout rate while Hispanic students have a 19.8% dropout rate.

The Regional Mid-Atlantic conducted a study from 2009-2018 on disciplinary removal rates in Maryland schools. They found that Black students and students with disabilities continued to be suspended and expelled at more than twice the rate of other students, even when incidents involved the same type of infraction.

**It is of the utmost importance to reverse these trends in our schools by changing the way we engage and help students.**



### Restorative Practices Work

## BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A Johns Hopkins analysis of the first 15 Baltimore City schools that implemented restorative practices school wide found several positive impacts on the school community:

**44%** *Decline in school suspensions in the first year.*

**72%** *Of school staff reported an improved school climate.*

**69%** *Of school staff reported an improved student respect for one another.*

*Studies conducted in Pittsburgh, Oakland, Denver, Dallas, and other cities around that country have found that restorative practices result in the improvement of student attendance, performance, a stronger school community.*

### Why SB 68 is Needed

SB 68 aims to create a plan for "restorative practices schools" which county boards of education have the option to adopt when establishing these kinds of schools. Ultimately, the aim is to improve relations between teachers, students, and school administrators and provide a healthy learning environment for students.



#### Starting the Plan

The bill redefines the term "restorative approaches" with "restorative practices" & build a comprehensive plan for what a restorative school looks like.



#### A Plan for Success

The plan will outline how a restorative school trains its staff and what metrics a restorative school would use to determine success.



#### Consultation

The State Department of Education to consult educators and administrators who have established and operated restorative practice schools & establish model training materials.



#### A Framework for Schools

The outcome of SB 68 would be a plan that provides local county boards the framework they need to implement restorative practices schools, should they elect to do so.