

Manitou Springs Middle School

MANITOU SPRINGS DISTRICT 14

At the Foot of Pikes Peak

"Dare to Dream"

CHRIS BURR, PRINCIPAL
CAMERON JONES, DEAN OF STUDENTS
EDWARD D. LONGFIELD, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

May 3, 2011

Dear Jeannette,

I would like to update you on the practices of Restorative Justice in Manitou Springs Middle School. As you know I completed my training as an RJ facilitator in October, 2006. Since then I have been an eager advocate for this process and am happy to report that to date, we are still using RJ a lot.


Since 2006, I have facilitated approximately 100 mini-conferences. These are the times when I have just the students and perhaps a teacher to help students solve disputes and conflicts with each other. Also since then, I have either been a part of or facilitated 17 formal circle conferences for much larger conflicts. Due to my busy practice as a school counselor, I no longer facilitate the large conferences due to a lack of time. We have now "outsourced" facilitation, which has worked well. I now participate as a school official or community member.

I am happy to report that since implementing RJ, our school has experienced a significant reduction in recidivism (approximately 95%), suspensions and an increase in empathy, repair of harm, restoration of relationships, and appropriate consequences. This, in turn, has helped to change the culture of our school for the better.

Restorative practices are also used in the community of Manitou Springs as well as throughout the school district. Most of the conferences, mini or large are held for grades 6 - 12.

It is such a pleasure to be a part of this worldwide movement.

Sincerely,



Serena Pearson, Counselor
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Manitou Springs, Colorado
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