

Issue Brief

Support Restorative Practices in schools



Restorative Practices are a positive and effective way of helping students succeed and learn accountability for their actions



In **2017, HB 411 and SB 1064** were introduced to the Florida Congress to mandate school districts to fund and support the **implementation of school-based restorative practices**. These bills did not pass; we would like them reintroduced and supported.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, restorative practices curtail zero-tolerance requirements and enhance alternative disciplinary approaches. Restorative practices support **positive behavioral intervention** frameworks, help build community partnerships, and replace suspension rooms with learning centers.

Reintroducing and passing the 2017 HB 411 and SB 1064 bills would require districts to create “standards for intervention” that create **safe, supportive, and positive school climates**.

Other states have passed similar legislation that may serve as a model for a draft bill in Florida. Examples include Colorado’s HB 1211, Maryland’s HB 1287, and Virginia’s HB 1924 and SB 829.

Why support Restorative Practices?

In the 2017-2018 school year in Florida:

- 179,599 students were put in in-school suspension
- 144,611 students were put in out-of-school suspension
- 1,352 students were subject to corporal punishment

According to a 2019 study:

- Students that participated in restorative justice participated less in conflicts than those that did not
- These lessened conflicts lasted for at least 6 years after a short RJ intervention

Definitions

Restorative Practice/Restorative Justice: non-punitive disciplinary responses that focus on repairing harm done to relationships and people, developing solutions by engaging all persons affected by a harm, and accountability.

In-School Suspension: the temporary removal of a student from the school program not exceeding ten days (FLDOE)

Out-of-School Suspension: temporary removal of a student from a school and the school program for a period not exceeding ten days (FLDOE)

About RJ. (2015). Florida Restorative Justice Association. <https://www.floridarestorativejustice.com/about-rj.html>

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