

## Restorative Justice Case Studies

### *Case Study #1*

A teacher approaches you, the Dean of Students, to say that an 8<sup>th</sup> grade female student was spreading some rumors about a new female 8<sup>th</sup> grade student. In the course of the investigation, the victim also mentioned something that bothered her even more than the rumors.

The student began to explain how two 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys have been teasing her and calling her names. They say things like, "Do you know such and such loves you?" The two boys were also altering the girl's last name so that it sounded like a sexual slur. They would say this loudly near her locker for anyone to hear. You ask how long the boys have been doing this. The young girl answers, "For most of the year." It is now almost mid-December and according to the girl, these behaviors were happening to her several times daily.

The two boys, up to this point in time, have never been in trouble in the middle school. Neither had ever served a detention. In fact, one of the boys served as a New Student Guide for the past four years. New Student Guides are chosen by the teachers and Deans as solid, excellent role models for new students. This boy is the first and only student to have been chosen all four years of middle school to serve as a New Student Guide.

Finally, the school has lost an 8<sup>th</sup> grader in each of the previous two years during the first semester. Although there were certainly a few causes leading to their withdrawals, it is clear some bullying and aggressive behaviors played a part.

**Pretend you are the Dean of Students. How would you handle this incident?**

**Brainstorm with 4-5 colleagues close to you for about 5 minutes on ways to handle this situation.**

**Feel free to jot notes down in the space below.**

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### *Case Study #2*

The sixth grade history teacher comes to you, the Dean of Students, very upset about what happened in his class. After handing back a quiz, two students who failed the quiz, began standing up bragging about how poorly they performed in front of the class. The students high-fived others in the class, hooted and hollered, danced, and drew a lot of unneeded attention to themselves and their poor scores. These actions clearly disrupted the learning environment and made it difficult for the teacher to continue on with his lesson, reviewing the correct answers of the quiz with the other students in the class.

The teacher issues each student a detention for disrupting the class and making it difficult for others' to learn.

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### *Case Study #3*

As Dean of Students, you receive a phone call from the head custodian, very upset about “vandalism” in the boys’ locker room. When you arrive on the scene you notice that there is blue ink smeared about the floor and on the walls of the locker room, as well as remnants of a pen that clearly was broken, producing the large mess of ink.

Upon investigating, you find that there is a fifth grade student with a large amount of blue ink smeared on his physical education clothes and on his hands. He is a very shy boy and has had no issues with discipline related issues at this point.

You talk to the boy, and, after a few minutes, realize that he made the mess by throwing the pen against the wall, not thinking it would break. The ink got smeared on the walls and floor as he tried to clean it up with paper towels, not thinking that the paper towels would smear the ink instead of cleaning it up. The more he tried to clean up the mess, the more the ink got smeared.

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### *Case Study #4*

After recess one morning an irate teacher from the Lower School approaches you holding a detention in her hand. According to the teacher an 8<sup>th</sup> grade male student was “running full bore down the hallway playing football in the basement.” “He almost took me out!” The teacher shouted at the student several times before he stopped. While the Lower School teacher was speaking to the student, he became disrespectful in his answers toward her.

The student has a history of detentions in the middle school. At one point he came close to being suspended in his seventh grade year. This is toward the end of the first semester and the student has already been disciplined a couple of times. The amount of support from home, concerning discipline, has been waning since the beginning of the school year. During a recent phone call the mother has openly questioned whether the school is the right place for her son. “The school seems to be too strict!”

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