



International Institute
for Restorative Practices
Graduate School

Case Study

Maple Run Unified School District

📍 St. Albans City, VT

Maple Run Unified School District, comprised of five schools and approximately 2,646 students, has successfully integrated restorative practices into its culture and policies because its leadership values a community where everyone feels heard, safe, supported, and accountable.

Upon returning to school after COVID-19, students exhibited an increase in behavioral issues, including emotional outbursts, misuse of cellphones, general misbehavior, and classroom distractions. Maple Run turned to restorative practices to curb this trend in behavior. Since implementing restorative practices in 2021, as of August 2025, **89% of students report positive support at school**, citing at least one person they feel safe with in school. Academic achievements have grown as well, **including a 60% increase in literacy proficiency and a 255% increase in math proficiency**.

Focusing on demystifying restorative practices, creating teacher buy-in, offering professional development, and ensuring sustainability, Maple Run has made major strides in cultivating a culture based in restorative practices where school safety and academic excellence can thrive.

Categories of this case study

- K-12 Education
- Social-Emotional Learning & Restorative Practices
- Successful District-Wide Implementation
- Dispelling Myths & Misunderstandings about Restorative Practices
- School Safety

"We knew we needed to specifically invest our time and resources into a practice that was evidence based and focused on establishing a proactive foundation for staff, parents, and students so that everyone could feel heard, safe, supported, and accountable."

- Alexis Hoyt

Measured Success

- As of January 2025, 85% of students are meeting the district's behavioral benchmark of four major incidents or fewer—an increase of 21% in the last three years.
- [As of September 2025](#),
 - 89% of students report positive support at school. In grades 3 through 5, Maple Run is in the 90th percentile nationally. In grades 6 through 12, they're in the 80th percentile.
 - 98% contract retention of staff.
- As of June 2024, 70% of staff are trained in restorative practices.
 - 23 staff members are trained via the IIRP Training of Trainers model. This positions Maple Run to sustain their own training needs toward their goal of 100% of staff trained.
- Student SEL survey results comparing Spring 2021 to Spring 2023:
 - 17% increase in the "Sense of Belonging": students' sense of connection and belonging with their teachers, administration, and peers at school.

Methods of Implementation

Through restorative practices–informed decision-making, the district has implemented several new processes and initiatives to improve school climate. Those include:

- Creating school-based restorative practices teams.
- Creating a district-wide Social Emotional Learning–Restorative Practices team.
- Creating a district-wide “Response to Harm” cohort. With the goal of sustainability, this team engages in enhanced learning to better prepare them for leading and training staff on how to utilize a restorative process in situations where there has been harm.
- Re-envisioning behavior-response matrices.
- Developing a five-year strategic plan that includes goals to measure the success of the adoption and implementation of restorative practices with fidelity across the district.

Teacher Buy-In

Student Support Director Alexis Hoyt has advocated for the increase in restorative practices training and professional development opportunities across the district. She notes that, besides the increase in the incorporation of restorative-focused responses and improvement in classroom culture, the district has seen an increase in the enthusiastic adoption of restorative practices, as staff are gaining a better understanding of its uses outside of discipline.

“In my opinion, the greatest impact of being able to offer this type of professional development to staff has been to decrease/clarify any misunderstandings related to what restorative practices are, and what they are not. To emphasize the importance of responding to student and staff needs in a proactive and preventative manner, versus the misconception that restorative practices only play a role in situations of harm.” - Alexis Hoyt

