

Emory University

Ubuntu: A Restorative Justice Approach to Anti-Bullying

A Professional Project Submitted to
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By

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We contend that there is another kind of justice, restorative justice, which has the characteristic of traditional African jurisprudence. Here the central concern is the healing of breaches, the redressing of imbalances, the restoration of broken relationships, a seeking to rehabilitate both the victim and the perpetrator, who should be given the opportunity to be reintegrated into the community he has injured by his offense.

---Bishop Desmond Tutu

I. Issue in the Practice of Ministry

The issue of bullying and its impact on the lives of children, families and communities is a social issue that transcends socio-economic, ethnicity, and racial constructs and has been identified by the Center for Disease Control as an urgent public health problem.¹ This is a problem that requires a response from families and schools, school boards, and community agencies, as well as faith communities and businesses. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) reports that nearly one in every four students (22%) in grades six through twelve reports being bullied.² This equates to a reality that every seven minutes a child is bullied with one million children being harassed, threatened, or subjected to other forms of cyberbullying on Facebook and other social media.

The National Education Association estimates that 160,000 children miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by other students.³ There are a myriad of reasons children are bullied either physically or via social media with the most prevalent being weight-based, sexual orientation, students with disabilities, and students of color. It is startling to think that American public schools house approximately 2.1 million bullies and 2.7 million of their victims.⁴ The consequences of bullying have both short and long-term consequences on the bully, bully-victims, and bystanders.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention states that in addition to physical injury bullying causes social and emotional distress and sometimes death.⁵ Children who are victimized

¹ "Understanding Bullying Factsheet 2016 - Bullying_factsheet.pdf," accessed January 28, 2017, https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/bullying_factsheet.pdf.

² "PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center," accessed January 25, 2017, <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>.

³ "NVEEE | Be Upstanding," accessed January 29, 2017, <http://www.nveee.org/>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Understanding Bullying Factsheet 2016 - Bullying_factsheet.pdf," accessed January 31, 2017, https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/bullying_factsheet.pdf.

by bullies are at an increased risk for depression, anxiety, sleep difficulties, and poor scholastic achievement. A new review of studies from thirteen countries, conducted by Yale School of Medicine, revealed an apparent connection between bullying, being bullied, and suicide. The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) reports that suicide rates among 10 to 14-year-olds have grown more than fifty percent over the last three decades and suicide remains among the leading causes of death of children under fourteen.⁶ Further, those who bully others are more likely to be at risk for substance abuse, academic failure, and violence later in adolescence and adulthood. Bystanders or witnesses to bullying behaviors do not go unscathed and often express feelings of inadequacy, guilt, and shame because they did not speak up on behalf of the bully victim.

In response to the increasing numbers of bullying incidents, schools in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the United States have increased in and after school programming focusing on anti-bullying and the prevention of violence. Most of these programs are developed for middle and high school students where much of the reported bullying, especially cyber-bullying incidents, occur. While some schools have increased the scope of punishment for students breaking the rules or employ a zero-tolerance approach, others have transitioned from the traditional retributive justice to a restorative approach to school discipline.

The model school community for such a transition is the Oakland Unified School District in Oakland, California. The founder of Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth, Fania E. Davis, was inspired by the work and success of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) that employed that philosophy of ubuntu⁷ to address violations of human rights atrocities

⁶ "Statistics | NVEEE," accessed January 28, 2017, <http://www.nveee.org/statistics/>.

⁷ Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (Image, 2000), 30–32. The philosophy of ubuntu embraces a philosophy of acknowledging our common humanity. It employs the concept of restorative justice as a practice for

during the apartheid years. Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth adopted the concept of ubuntu; reconciliation and restoration for the victim and the perpetrator, as its foundational philosophy to address school discipline.

In 2007, Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY), a city-funded program, was implemented at West Oakland Middle School as a pilot project. The restorative approach to school discipline eliminated violence and expulsions and reduced suspension rates by eighty-seven percent, saving the school thousands in attendance and Title I funding. Inspired by the successes of our Middle School pilot, by May 2008, nearly 20 Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) principals requested training to launch programs at their sites.⁸

There is a plethora of literature and research on employing restorative practices in middle and high schools as an alternative to the traditional retributive or zero- tolerance policies to address school discipline. There is much less information available on restorative practices at the elementary school level, creating a gap in literature for this age group, particularly evident with the lower grades kindergarten through second grade. The research did not reveal a reason for the gap.

This project proclaims that restorative justice practices can be employed as an approach to the issue of bullying (cyber-bullying) and should be implemented in elementary schools. Elementary school is a critical time of human values development and restorative justice practices focus on living in community, providing life skills that go beyond the schoolyard, and teach children to resolve breaches and restore relationships.

healing and reconciliation. The TRC led by Bishop Desmond Tutu was key to a peaceful transition of South Africa's government from the apartheid years to the free election of Nelson Mandela.

⁸ "Restorative Justice For Oakland Youth | Just Another WordPress Site," accessed January 25, 2017, <http://rjoyoakland.org/>.

In the following sections, we will discuss “the why” of the project through close examination of its goals and relevance through the lens of this ministry context. This examination will serve as a connective thread that illumines the reasoning in the process of curriculum design, selection of trainers, and implementation. Additionally, this project might offer helpful solutions to teachers, administrators, and others who work with young children and seek new strategies, especially related to the issue of bullying, that not only reduce or eliminate the problem, but also develop and empower young children to be peacemakers.

Arlington Elementary School (AES) and the congregation of Arlington United Methodist Church (AUMC) enjoy a positive relationship that focuses on the educational, social, and spiritual needs of the students. Engaging with the school and community is critical to the call of ordination to the Order of Elders in the United Methodist Church and is imbedded in the understanding and living as a servant-leader. The positive relationship, established trust, and mutual respect between the school and the congregation was a critical component in the development of the goals and relevance of the project described in the next section.

II. Goals and Relevance of Project

The purpose of this project is to address an issue of concern in my ministry context. Arlington Elementary School, located in Jacksonville, Florida, has experienced increased incidents of bullying over the past year. During the 2014-15 school year bullying incidents were nearly doubled from the previous year. The incidences of bullying at Arlington occur at all grade levels. There were 18 school-wide during the first nine weeks of 2015-16 school year, with the majority occurring in the 4th and 5th grades. The correlation between fear of being bullied and its impact on student academic performance is well documented. Children who fear attending school because they are not confident that school administrators, teachers or classmates will protect

them from bullies are more likely to be less attentive to teachers. Twenty-six percent of the students of AES missed fifteen or more school days during the 2015-16 school year.

Arlington Elementary School and the congregation of Arlington United Methodist Church have a long-standing relationship that is rooted in the Duval Public School System's Community Partners Program as well as the theological tasks and the social principles of the United Methodist Church.⁹ As a Community Partner, the congregation serves the students, staff and faculty in various capacities dependent upon the needs of the school. Members serve as readers, assistance in grounds upkeep, teaching students how to grow their own garden as well as providing financial assistance for uniforms, school supplies and special events. At the start of each new school year, during holidays, and prior to the last day of school, the Community Partners team provides breakfast to the staff and faculty of AES. Several of the members, including myself, are active members of the School Advisory Committee and the Parent/Teacher's Association.

As a Community Partner, the principal of AES reached out to AUMC for assistance with two specific areas that she and her staff prioritized as urgent needs that they felt were negatively impacting student academic performance: poor math skills and increasing incidents of bullying. In response to the school's generative themes¹⁰ and in conversation with members of AUMC who are involved in this project, the focus would be to develop an anti-bullying program with three main goals: to equip students with tools and strategies they could employ when confronted with bullying behavior, to effectively reduce the number of bullying incidents, and to provide space for the restoration of those who bully to their school community. It is the assertion of this

⁹ *Social Principles of The United Methodist Church: 2013-2016*, (United Methodist Publishing House, Washington DC, 2013), p. 29.

¹⁰ John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*, 1 edition (Evanston, Ill.; Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications, 1993).

study that if the number of bullying incidents/disciplinary referrals are reduced and there is a perception of personal safety where each student is valued, academic performance will increase and school grades will reflect that change.

The proposed solution to address the issue was to design and implement a six-week curriculum that would be used in the classroom for grades kindergarten to fifth grade. This curriculum would co-exist with the established morning meetings and would address bullying and equip students with tools and strategies for dealing with bullying behavior, would equip them with the tools to reduce incidents of bullying, and would develop them to become peacemakers. The expected outcomes were:

Short-term:

- A decrease in bullying at Arlington Elementary School
- A decrease in principal referrals for bullying and other disruptive behaviors
- An increase in academic performance at all grade levels
- An increase in school grade scores

Desired Long-term:

- Improvement in student academic achievement
- Students who are better equipped to recognize and respond appropriately when they are being bullied
- Students will learn life skills on how to stand up for others when they witness bullying or other oppressive behaviors in their school and/or community

The rationale for using the restorative approach to address the bullying issue is influenced by my theological understanding of reconciliation as it relates to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, my experiences while working with the South African Defense Force following the election of President Mandela (my first exposure to ubuntu), the work of the TRC, Jane Elliot's work in teaching children how to identify and deal with issues of prejudice,¹¹ and sociologist

¹¹ "Jane Elliott's Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes Exercise," accessed January 31, 2017, <http://www.janeelliott.com/>. Following the assassination of Rev. Martin L. King, Jane Elliot, a third- grade teacher in Rice, Iowa, created a model, "Brown Eyes/Blue eyes to teach her students the damage done by discriminatory and racist behaviors. The children were divided by the color of their eyes where each eye color group experienced what it was like to be treated differently, denied opportunities and rejected because of the color of their eyes. The children learned a

Morris Massey's writings on values development¹². The contextual scope for this project offered an excellent opportunity for a trial implementation of Ubuntu: A Restorative Approach to Anti-Bullying.

III. Contextual Scope of Project

Arlington is a 125-year-old United Methodist Church with a rich history of inclusiveness and sending forth candidates for vocations in the clergy. Arlington is located on the east side of the St. Johns River across from downtown Jacksonville, Florida, in an economic and ethnically diverse urban community. The church is a community resource and is an asset to the children and families surrounding the church and in the immediate community.

In 1968, Arlington's membership was 2,090 and was the central place of worship for the growing community. The church was vibrant, growing, and was a model of inclusiveness. AUMC was appointed the first female ordained pastor in the Florida Annual Conference in 1975. Until approximately 1989 the ethnic makeup of the congregation, which was white/middle/upper middle class, reflected the demographics of the community surrounding the church at its present and previous locations. Most of the members lived in the homes surrounding the church and while there was intentional evangelism, a lot of the growth was due to the reality that it was the first church built in the community and for a very long time the only church. It was that growth that contributed to the need to move the first building to a new site and finally the move to the present location.

The congregation supported the ecclesiology of the Methodist Church and was successful for many years with a church model that, while providing community benevolence, the ministries

powerful lesson about discrimination. The experience had a profound impact on them that they shared how it shaped them to be culturally aware adults.

¹² "Values Development," accessed March 7, 2017, http://changingminds.org/explanations/values/values_development.htm.

were mainly focused on the needs of the members of the congregation. In the early 90’s the community of Arlington, similar to a lot of communities across the country, transitioned from a predominantly white middle/upper middle-class community to one that is ethnically and economically diverse (table 1, table 2). The residences reflect the community’s diversity and include low income housing, one-family units, large apartment complexes, as well as gated communities and middle/upper middle class housing areas that are often adjacent to each other.

| | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Asian | 1,644 |
| Blacks/AA | 21,884 |
| White | 32,104 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 5,709 |
| PAC IS/AM IND/OTH | 2,051 |
| Total | 63,392 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Congregation by age | 50% 60 Years ^ |
| White Collar Jobs | 60% |
| College Education | 65% |
| Average Income | ^ Average Income (see table 3) |
| Homeowners | 80% |
| White | 85% |
| Black/AA/Hispanic/African/Multi | 15% |
| Total Membership | 845 |

| Household Income Trends | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Average HH Income | 57,649 | 56,570 | 61,505 |
| Median HH Income | 46,650 | 44,621 | 48,205 |
| Per Capita Income | 22,668 | 22,276 | 24,288 |

¹³ “<https://Maps.missioninsite.com/Maphttps://Maps.missioninsite.com/Maps.aspx#s.aspx>,” n.d.

¹⁴ Arlington United Methodist Church, Annual Church Profile, 2016, p 2.

¹⁵ “<https://Maps.missioninsite.com/Maphttps://Maps.missioninsite.com/Maps.aspx#s.aspx>.”

The demographic changes in the community that were slowly occurring in the late 80's and early 90's continued to increase. By the time of the economic recession and housing market collapse the demographic change began to have an impact on church membership. The demographics of the congregation no longer reflected that of the community. The Church remained as a predominantly white middle/upper-middle class congregation. With a sustained decline in membership, the leaders and appointed pastor agreed that there was a possibility that changes would have to take place to prevent the church from eventually closing.

In 2005, Arlington embarked on a four year Refocus process, supported by the Annual Conference, that offers identified struggling congregations an opportunity to examine their mission, vision and ministries of their church to determine ministry effectiveness and develop or revision the purpose of the church in the context it found itself. The model of an inwardly turned congregation began to transform itself and is still in the process of transformation. There are some in the congregation that remember the heyday of Arlington's success and they would like to see that happen again but now for different reasons. In a recent self-report to the Annual Conference the Staff Parish Relations Chair, who is responsible for completing the report, describes the church ecclesiology and wrote the following:

“We believe, theologically, in the Bible as the Word of God, in Jesus Christ's call to discipleship and evangelism, in the policies, beliefs and tenants of the United Methodist Church, and in opening our hearts and minds to our surrounding community while at the same time meeting the needs of our members. As part of our church's vision, we believe God wants us to be in ministry to the people of our neighborhood. This neighborhood includes people of various ethnic groups, income and social status.”¹⁶

There exists in the congregation a hunger to learn more about their relationship with God and how they might be a light in the community. The language amongst the congregation has

¹⁶ Arlington United Methodist Church, Annual Church Profile, 2016, p 3.

changed from volunteers to servants and it is reflected in how the congregation describes their understanding on how to be the church.

Arlington Elementary School has a long and rich history in the Arlington community. It was established in 1922 as Arlington Grammar School, District School No. 46 due to the efforts of the women of the Arlington Community Club. The school was a great asset to the Arlington community and was a contributing factor for the later consolidation of surrounding communities and is listed as a historical site. There are quite a few members of the AUMC congregation that attended or had children attended AES. The demographics of the school reflect an unusually high percentage of African American students in contrast to the percentage of African Americans in the community (table 4). Arlington Elementary is a Title 1 school with 70.6% of the students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The family income for NSLP eligibility is \$15,171 (130% below the poverty level). All students at AES receive free breakfast and lunch.¹⁷

StartClass, an organization that evaluates elementary schools in the United States based on several factors, including academic performance and school environment, gave AES a rating of 4 out of a possible 10 in comparison to the average rating of 6 for elementary schools in Florida. This rating correlates with the current school grade of “D” assigned by the Florida Department of Education. This grade is based on state achievement examinations that test for achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Other significant factors that reflect the selection of bullying as a generative theme to address are a higher than normal rate of in/out of school suspensions (4.1%), an absentee rate that reports 26% of AES students missed more than 15 days of school, and 82% of 18 full-time teachers missed more than ten days of work. These numbers may be

¹⁷ “Arlington Elementary School in Jacksonville, FL,” accessed March 10, 2017, <http://public-schools.startclass.com/l/20160/Arlington-Elementary-School>.

indicators of other organizational dynamics; however, research clearly supports that high absenteeism are often symptoms of other issues such as a lack of school safety, fear of bullying, and/or frustration with the ability to effectively implement classroom management.

| Table 4. ¹⁸AES Demographics | | |
|---|-------|------------------------------|
| White | 18.6% | <u>School Grades</u> |
| Hispanic/Latino | 6.4% | 2015-2016 F |
| Asian | 0.3% | 2014-2015 D |
| Black/AA | 71.9% | 2013-2014 C |
| Biracial | 2.4% | 2012-2013 B |
| American Indian | 0.3% | 2011-2012 A |
| Total Enrolled | 295 | <u>Student Teacher Ratio</u> |
| | | 13:1 |
| | | <u>Gender</u> |
| Male | 55% | <u>Absenteeism</u> |
| Female | 45% | Students 15+ 26% |
| | | Teachers 10+ 72% |
| | | <u>School Discipline</u> |
| In/Out School Suspensions | 4.1% | <u>Counselor Ratio</u> |
| | | 295:1 |
| Title 1 Eligibility | 71% | |

V. Description of Project, Research Method & Tools

A. Training

The selection and training of the facilitators for the project was one of the most important components of the project. In a congregation with an average age of 60 years old and with folks likely more familiar with the aspects of retributive justice, it was critical to select people who were open to a paradigm shift in how they viewed and understood justice. There are sixteen classes, grades kindergarten through fifth, which meant eighteen trainers (two served as alternates) were needed to insure there was a trained person in each classroom. Twenty members

¹⁸ "Arlington Elementary School in Jacksonville, FL," accessed March 10, 2017, <http://public-schools.startclass.com/l/20160/Arlington-Elementary-School>.

of Arlington (12 women/8 men) agreed to serve and all participated in sixteen hours of training utilizing curriculum designed specifically for this project. The trainers included retired elementary school teachers, a retired doctor, AUMC's Director of Youth Ministries, AUMC's Director of Children's Ministries, AUMC's Business Administrator, a retired policeman, stay-at-home mothers, an art teacher, and a sub-contractor who brought a vast amount of experience of working with children. The ethnic diversity of the group accurately reflects the church demographics with three African American women and one African American male representative in this group. The training was divided into two sections: (1) Values development, the concept of ubuntu and restorative justice practices and (2) Curriculum review and application.

Morris Massey, professor and sociologist, proposes that human values development experience three distinct periods: Imprint (birth -7 years); Modeling (8-13 years) and Socialization (13-21 years).²⁰ He describes the Imprint Period, as a time when we are like sponges and absorb everything (good and bad). The critical component at this age is to learn a sense of right and wrong, good and bad. The Modeling Period, he asserts, is when we copy people, generally parents, but there are other influences. This age often experiences hero worship; those heroes being teachers, religious leaders or others they deem knowledgeable. Children are generally in elementary school during both the imprint and modeling periods. Elementary school is an appropriate and, I assert, the critical time to introduce restorative practices to the school environment. Key to the philosophy of ubuntu and restorative justice is valuing every member of the community (classroom) and there is no better time than when they are in the early stages of values development.

²⁰ Massey, "Values Development."

Ubuntu's guiding characteristic is the importance of understanding and acknowledging our common humanity and connectedness. It is a way of living in community that affirms the whole without diminishing any individual person. Ubuntu, like the practices of restorative justice, focuses on healing and reconciliation of broken relationships between individuals, communities and as demonstrated in South Africa. Someone who embraces and lives the philosophy of ubuntu affirms and celebrates the successes of others and is genuinely concerned with the well-being of the whole rather than themselves. While challenging to explain in western terms, it can be understood from a Christian perspective as grace. The Christian understanding of grace gives, as modeled by Jesus, space for forgiveness, repairing of broken relationships, and restoration. Some of the participants were familiar with the concept of ubuntu from sermon illustrations, magazine articles and, most recently, at the death of Nelson Mandela. During the training we examined and discussed the differences between restorative and retributive justice practices, the advantages/disadvantages of the two approaches, and the practical theology of restoration and transformation lived out in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

Included in this section was training on the use of restorative circles as a practice for resolving conflict²¹ that focuses on the harm that has occurred rather than a law that has been broken. Restorative practices address and discuss the need of the school community; build healthy relationships between educators and students; reduce, prevent, and improve harmful behavior; repair harm and restore positive relationships; resolve conflict; and hold individuals and groups accountable. These practices lead to different questions when an infraction has occurred. Traditional questions in a retributive justice system focuses on the law and seek to find answers to the following questions: What law/rule was broken?, Whose fault is it (who did it

²¹ Boyes-Watson, Carolyn; Pranis, Kay, *Circle Forward: Building a Restorative School Community* (St. Paul, MN: Living Justice Press, 2015), 47.

and who do we blame?) What do they deserve? (how shall we punish them)? In contrast, restorative practices ask these questions: Who has been hurt and what harm was done? What are their needs? Whose obligation is this? What repair is needed and who is responsible?²²

Section two of the training gave the participants an opportunity to review the facilitator guide, the supporting materials for each lesson, and practice using the restorative justice questions in the context of bullying behaviors. There was time designated for discussion amongst team members to discuss strategies as they related to confidentiality, legal requirements to report in cases of suspected child abuse, and the boundaries related to discussions about faith. Although the teachers were scheduled to be present during the training it was important for the facilitators to have strategies in place. With the input and assistance provided by the elementary teachers participating we developed age appropriate language to explain complex concepts. It was especially important as a team to develop the restorative justice questions for kindergarten through second grade students. Employing a combination of pictures that represented the concept, a poster was developed specifically for this age group. The training was completed two weeks prior to the implementation date providing facilitators time to become familiar with the facilitator guide and supporting materials.

B. Implementation

The training was scheduled for 8:30 to 9:00 a.m on Wednesday mornings for six weeks. Prior to each session, the “Ubuntu” team gathered in the church parking lot to pray for the children, ask any last-minute questions for clarification, and pick up supporting materials for the current lesson. Throughout the implementation process each facilitator had an assigned class. My function as design and implementation coordinator was to observe and evaluate two or three

²²Howard Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice: Revised and Updated*, Revised, Updated edition (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2015), 33.

classes each session for impact on the students and facilitator effectiveness. Those observations and short reflection statement follow the individual lesson descriptions for each unit of instruction and are designed to connect the purpose and rationale to previous lessons, as well as to serve as a building block for future lessons. Following each session, the team gathered to share their experiences and offer feedback from the current lesson.

Ubuntu: A Restorative Approach to Anti-Bullying

Unit One: Creating Community – “We Are Family”

Rationale: This lesson lays the foundation for the work of anti-bullying prevention. It is important for the students to feel safe and accepted, knowing that their feelings and opinions matter and that they are a valued member of the class/school. Psychologists, sociologists, and educators agree that when children are confident in who they are and feel valued, there is a greater chance they will respect others, therefore bullying is less likely to occur, if at all. This lesson helps to create an environment of teamwork and helping one another be successful in the classroom and keeping each other accountable as part of the family.

Purpose: To lay a foundation that develops a classroom/school culture of acceptance and trust.

Goals: Students will learn to acknowledge the importance of valuing every member of the class/school as a member of the family/community.

Activities: The facilitators, while teaching the same lesson, used grade level materials to communicate the lesson of inclusion. The book utilized by grades kindergarten through second grade was *What I Like About Me*, written by Karen Katz,²⁴ while grades 3-5 listened to the story of *Sneetches* by Dr. Seuss.²⁶ All students were then led in a discussion with questions such as, “what makes a family a family?” Additionally, the older students discussed the importance of

²⁴ Allia Nolan, *What I Like About Me* (New York: Studio Fun International, 2010).

²⁶ Dr. Seuss, *The Sneetches And Other Stories* (New York: Random House, 1961), 3–25.

realizing that what one looks like on the outside has nothing to do with their value as members of a family. The lesson concluded with each student placing their picture (provided by the team) on a poster board designed for their classroom as a place for family pictures. The poster board for family pictures offers a sense of belonging and the board will be utilized in every lesson.

Observations: All the students in each of the kindergarten and fifth grade classes I observed responded positively to the materials demonstrated by enthusiastic participation, engaging dialogue, and sometimes profound disclosures about their own families. In one of the classes a male student responded to the question, “what makes a family?” by stating, “I am John, from Chicago and I don’t know my father’s name.” There was no laughter or gasps and the next student took her turn as expected. The students comprehended the lesson goals and especially enjoyed placing their picture on the family board as they made one statement about what they liked about themselves or about someone in the class. A key component of ubuntu is to strive to be a person who values and celebrates the good in other people as well as themselves.

Unit Two: Communications: “Talking Together”

Rationale: Respectful communication is more likely to be heard. This lesson builds on the previous lesson on community and prepares them for the next lessons that will address ubuntu and bullying. When individuals and communities value themselves they are more apt to see the value in others. In this context, there is a potential for more effective communications and less for conflict (bullying). This lesson is designed to give voice and methodologies to students so they become effective communicators.

Purpose: Teaching students how to be effective communicators can prevent conflict and helps to create a culture of openness and trust.

Goal: To help students improve their communication skills at school and at home.

Activities: The facilitators began the session with a quick review of the previous lesson on families and asked how they communicate in their family. That was followed by a question seeking to find out what they might know and understand about the communications process, and also to find out what happens when we communicate effectively and ineffectively. All students learn the four parts of the Communication Pie: respectful words, respectful tone of voice, respectful body language, and respectful listening skills.²⁷ The kindergarten through second grades utilized a familiar communications exercise, the Whispering Game,²⁸ and Mr. Potato Head to illustrate the different parts of the pie. The third through fifth grades participated in role play designed to illustrate incorrect and correct behaviors correlated to the parts of the communication pie. The older students were also provided worksheets and opportunities to practice active listening skills. The facilitators reminded the students how important it is to listen carefully when others are talking and encouraged them to share examples of when they or others made a mistake because they were not listening respectfully. This lesson also introduced the idea that they can be peacemakers. Peacemakers are often good listeners because they listen respectfully, paying close attention to what they hear and see.

Observations: One first and one third grade class were the focus of these observations. The facilitator for the first grade class created a tactile model for the students to help them understand the parts of the communication pie. She made a puzzle out of a paper plate for the students. Puzzle pieces only fit one way and it seemed to reinforce the lesson that all parts must work together for good communications. For this grade the puzzle was more effective than the

²⁷ Corlette Sande, *The Young Peacemaker: Teaching Students to Respond to Conflict in God's Way*, 2nd ed. edition (Wapwalloppen: Shepherd Press, 1997), 158.

²⁸ Dr Ron Claassen and Roxanne Harvin Claassen, *Making Things Right: Activities That Teach Restorative Justice, Conflict Resolution, Mediation, and Discipline That Restores Includes 32 Detailed Lesson Plans with Prepared Projections and Handouts*, Second Edition edition (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015), 144.

whispering game that created more of a distraction than a useful teaching tool. The third grade class quickly took on the role play and recognized and acknowledged how their own behaviors sometimes had a negative effect on the communication process. A key component of the concept of restorative practices is to understand the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions and being held accountable for personal behavior.

Unit Three: Ubuntu – “Learning and Living Together”

Rationale: The philosophy of ubuntu is the connective thread that binds this curriculum. It is a value system that affirms, encourages, and supports others. Ubuntu is rooted in the concept of restorative justice that is concerned about needs and roles and requires a different set of practices than retributive justice.

Purpose: To introduce students to Restorative Justice practices and how those practices can help when they are the target of bullying behaviors, witness bullying, or are the bully themselves.

Goal: Students will learn alternative methods to deal with conflict based on the restorative practices model of discipline with a focus specifically on bullying.

Activities: The facilitators presented the students with pictures of Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu and asked if they recognized the photos. It was an opportunity to assess what the students know and to share with them a synopsis of their stories as peacemakers. The kindergarten, first, and second grade classes heard a story, *The Peace Book*, by Todd Parr³⁰ that illustrates the simple ways children can be peacemakers. All grades were introduced to the Restorative Justice Poster (RJP)³¹ that asks the questions that focus on restoring peace between friends, in the classroom, or at home. The language used on the RJP poster was too complicated

³⁰ Todd Parr, *The Peace Book* (Boston: Little Brown And Company, 2004).

³¹ “Home - IIRP Graduate School,” accessed March 8, 2017, <http://www.iirp.edu/>.

for the younger grades. Instead, they were presented with a poster that had the same concept but in language younger students could understand - pictures.

Each class received a stuffed toy dolphin to use as their talking piece when they assembled for circle time. They were told the purpose of the talking piece and that it would be used in the lesson on bullying and restorative justice circles. Restorative justice circles are rooted in the belief that circles in which all members feel connected and respected are helpful.

Observations: One kindergarten and one fourth grade class are the focus of these observations. The fourth- grade students initially pushed back against the restorative questions. They thought the questions, especially the boys, made them sound like they were afraid to stand up for themselves. The facilitator did a good job responding to their concerns and reminding them that everyone has an opportunity to choose a path of peace or one that leads to violence. He convinced them to try the restorative questions and they were surprised how the questions led to other conversations about fears and friendship.

The kindergarten class was enthusiastic and upbeat and they loved saying the word, “ubuntu.” One small girl said, “the word just makes me want to smile!” They sat quietly and quite seriously as they listened to *The Peace Book*, as though they were getting secret instructions. Students also had an opportunity to place items from the *Peace Book*, such as small items of clothing, seeds, diverse dolls, plastic food, and replicas of blankets, in a peace bag brought in by one of the facilitators. Some of the students, as they placed them in the bag, quietly said “ubuntu.” The kindergartners also made up an Ubuntu cheer!

---Ubuntu, ubuntu...this is what you should do! (clap 4x on legs while chanting)
---Keep the peace, keep the peace (roll hands around & end in peace sign on each hand)
---Don't let it go away, or this is what we say, Keep the Peace, Keep the Peace!
---Start off slow and soft and gradually increase in speed going faster and louder.
---I Am a Peacemaker (repeat 3 x)

Unit Four: When Bullying Happens – Who’s Job Is It to Stop Bullying?

Rationale: If students are expected to identify bullying behaviors and know how to respond, they must be given the tools and strategies for success. Many students are unaware how their behaviors constitute bullying and what they can do to stop it from happening to them and others. Four major questions are addressed in this lesson for all grades: What is bullying? Who is bullied? Why do kids bully? and What can we do about bullying? In this lesson the students will be introduced to talking out their feelings using the talking piece while in restorative justice circles. This lesson connects to previous lessons as they consider how we talk to family members, how effective communications can prevent or correct bullying behaviors and the importance of kindness and forgiveness (ubuntu).

Purpose: To give students a clear definition of bullying that is in line with the definition acknowledged by Duval County Public Schools. To help them identify some reasons why bullying occurs.

Goal: To give students an opportunity to check their own behavior to see if they may be bullying others/if they are being bullied/how they feel when they are a witness to bullying.

Activities: The students in kindergarten, first, and second grades heard the story of *The Recess Queen*,³² by Alexis O’Neill. The story is about a little girl who was the schoolyard bully and was mean and selfish to every child in the school. Jean behaved in this way until a new girl came to school and, unaware of her reputation, turned everything around. In this story, the children hear how a single person can make a difference; not with fists but with kind words and an invitation to play. It illustrates the way children can resolve some of their own problems without the presence of adults. This book was a key component in explaining to young children how to

³² Alexis O’Neill, *The Recess Queen* (New York: Scholastic Press, 2002).

appropriately respond to bullying. The younger students were also given a “Feelings” handout³³ with pictures that reflected a myriad of feelings to assist them in deciding how they were feeling if they were the bully, the target, or a witness. The discussion in all grades emphasized that anyone can be bullied and no one ever deserves to be bullied.

The students in grades 3-5 spent most of their time reviewing the restorative justice poster and practicing how to properly utilize the talking piece. They were given two handouts that gave them an opportunity to answer privately if they felt like a target or if they participated in bully behaviors. They also participated in role plays to see if they could identify bullying behavior and what they would do in the situation. A critical part of this lesson was for students to understand that they were not powerless and employing the restorative justice questions could stop bullying and improve the class/school environment.

Observations: The focus of these observations are second and fifth grades.

The second-grade students loved the story of *The Recess Queen*. They identified with both the students who were bullied in the story as well as those who were witnesses to the bullying. They discussed what they could do if they were in the same situations. The students were given an opportunity to use the talking stick (dolphin) to ensure each student who wanted to talk could do so without interruption. The talking piece was a challenge for this age group but with practice they should get better at waiting for their turn to speak.

The fifth-grade class observed during this lesson worked hard at utilizing the restorative justice questions as they responded to the handouts that helped them to identify when or if they had participated, been a target or a witness to bullying behaviors. They seemed to grasp and

³³ “PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center,” accessed January 25, 2017, http://www.pacer.org/bullying/?gclid=CjwKEAjwu8m-BRDM8KTcjdj8qy0SJACdjSZpf_Ai_sll-LPe_qjoIMNHQFlN9RVCUwAIXm1FJFLORRoC2krw_wcB.

embraced the concept of the talking piece and found it useful for giving everyone a chance to speak. A few of the male students had some difficulty or resisted connecting the restorative questions with the goal of confronting bullying behavior. Like the fourth-grade boys, they felt that the questions made them seem afraid to defend themselves. I assert that this reaction from the fourth and fifth grade boys is rooted in how they perceive themselves and how they wish to be perceived as tough, not afraid of anything or anyone, as well as a way to maintain their status amongst their peers.

Unit 5: Circle Up – “Making Things Right”

Rationale: The practice of circles is helpful for building and maintain a healthy community in which all members feel connected.³⁴ Restorative circles, when utilized to address bullying, provide space to give both the victim and the one who did harm an opportunity to speak and be heard. This is especially important for young children who by default are often discounted because they are small children. Students also learn to exercise patience, to practice and improve their active listening skills, and realize they can address conflict in ways that do not require the demeaning of others. The students are given several scenarios to role play, discuss and practice “making things right.”

Purpose: To teach the students a method to resolve conflict in a healthy process that allows restoration for the victim of bullying and reconciliation for the bully.

Goal: Students will learn to use restorative practices to resolve conflict when they are bullied, witness bullying or are the bully themselves.

Activities: This lesson focuses on student participation as they practice using the talking piece. They are instructed to remember the lessons on effective communications, how we treat family

³⁴ Boyes-Watson, Carolyn; Pranis, Kay, *Circle Forward: Building a Restorative School Community*, 446.

members and how we can become peacemakers when we consider kindness, take responsibility for our behaviors that hurt others, and there is always an opportunity to repair broken relationships. Ubuntu! The circle keeper (the teacher in grades kindergarten through second grades or a student in upper grades) reminded students that the only the person who is holding the talking piece should be speaking. The restorative circles aim at making things right as an alternative to punishment. It should be stressed that “making things right” does not mean the person who did harm simply gets off the hook. The person who was harmed, and sometimes the community, work together to find a viable and reasonable solution that satisfies all key stakeholders.³⁵ Students are reminded that these practices develop skills that help us to be peacemakers.

Observations: The focus of these observations are on second, third, and fourth grade classes. The facilitator acted as the circle keeper for the second grade class. The students were eager to participate and for some it was a struggle to wait for their turn. The facilitator used “what if” questions to give the students a focus for their responses. With some prompting students could connect and apply previous lessons on family and effective communications.

The third and fourth-grade students were given specific scenarios designed to encourage application of skills learned in previous lessons. The talking piece was especially effective for these grades and they carefully considered their responses before they asked to speak. It was interesting and rewarding to see the fourth-grade boys resist the impulse for easy answers and genuinely try to use the restorative questions as an alternative way to resolve issues of bullying and other conflicts.

Unit 6: Peacemaking Children – “I Am a Peacemaker”

³⁵ Kay Pranis, *The Little Book of Circle Processes : A New/Old Approach to Peacemaking*, Original ed. edition (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2005), 294.

Rationale: Students have been introduced to a series of skills, concepts, and methods to address the issue of bullying in their school community. The students are told if they practice and work on improving how they value their family (classmates), employ respectful communication skills, practice forgiveness, and use circles as method to talk things out, they are demonstrating peacemaking skills. All students heard the story of Malala Yousafza of Pakistan, the youngest Noble Peace Prize recipient in history. Malala was nearly killed because she spoke up for the right for girls to be educated.

Purpose: To tie together the concept of ubuntu to the way we treat one another and how our behavior can help us to be peacemakers in our homes, school and community.

Goals: Students will learn to connect the importance of valuing others, respectful communications, human kindness and a restorative approach to resolving conflict are characteristics of peacemakers.

Activities: Posters with pictures of Martin L. King, Jr, Mother Theresa, and the Dali Lama, all who have received the Noble Peace Prize, were shown to the students. The facilitators then asked, “how old are peacemakers?” They presented a picture of Malala and asked if she could be a peacemaker. Students in kindergarten, first, and second grades heard the story, *Warrior with Words*,³⁶ by Karen Leggett while the older students heard the story, *For the Right to Learn*,³⁷ by Rebecca Langston-George. The students were surprised to find out how young this peacemaker was and they wanted to know more about her. The books were age appropriate and most students were fascinated with her story. The facilitators pointed out to the students that Malala demonstrated some of the same characteristics that we had been talking about: kindness,

³⁶ Karen Abouraya, *Malala Yousafzal: Warrior With Words* (New York: StarWalk Kids Media, 2014).

³⁷ Rebecca George, *For The Right To Learn: Malala Yousafzai's Story* (Minnesota: Capstone, 2016).

respectful language, valuing all people no matter who they are, and trying to find peaceful ways to resolve the problem of excluding girls from receiving an education.

The facilitators shared with the students, “In the same way, Malala spoke up for others and helped to change her world so can you. When you remember to include others in activities, be kind to everyone even when they are not kind to others; speaking respectfully to all and remembering to use the restorative skills of questioning when trying to resolve problems or dealing with bullying helps to keep the peace in your home, school and community. It makes you a Peacemaker!”

Observations: At the end of the class each student was awarded a certificate and a t-shirt as a reminder of their new knowledge and skills. The shirts are imprinted with the phrase, “I am a Peacemaker.” Many of the teachers are having the students wear them on field trips as an easy way to identify their children and as a challenge to each student to live into the phrase on their shirts. T-shirts were also provided for the staff and faculty of the school. The students were thrilled with the shirts and they promised to continue practicing the skills they had learned.

V. Project Outcome

The project was successfully designed and implemented within the protocols described in Section II of this document. The immediate results of the short-term goals, which were to decrease the number of bullying incidents and principal referrals, were excellent. The principal reported that the number of bullying incidents dropped significantly from eighteen in the previous year to five incidents for the same time-frame of August to December 2016. She was confident that the information the students learned during the anti-bullying training had a positive impact on the students and faculty as a catalyst to the decline. Of the five incidents that did occur, three were resolved using the restorative practices and two resulted in principal

referrals because of the seriousness and repetition of the bullying behavior. Feedback from the teachers was positive and there were requests for the team to return for follow-up training. In response to their requests, there were two follow-up sessions presented during the first week following winter break. This training was in January, three months after the initial training was completed.

There were two sessions: a review and an introduction for new students. In the review session, students were able to identify and explain the major concepts of ubuntu, effective communications processes, and, with prompting, recall the four restorative questions. The kindergarten students who helped to create the ubuntu cheer remembered it and eagerly taught it to their older classmates. They also reported that bullying still happened and they were more confident as to how they could respond when confronted with bullying behaviors. The new students did not receive the full presentation. They received information on the meaning of ubuntu, the communications pie, and heard the story of *The Recess Queen*. Although the newly enrolled students received a shortened version of the course they responded positively and, like their classmates, enjoyed the story. Their responses and abilities to demonstrate they understood the information again affirms the proclamation of this project.

In a review of the short-term goals the results are mixed. The impact of the training achieved the goals of a decrease in bullying and bullying related principal referrals. While the current results do not reveal an immediate increase in student academic performance, the principal indicated that it may require more than one grading cycle to effectively evaluate the impact on academic performance. The goal to increase in school grades, that are determined by results of mandatory state testing, will not be completed prior to the completion of this project but will be monitored through the community partners team.

The desired long-term goals will not be evaluated here for effectiveness but will instead be employed as “next steps” for the community partners team and the facilitators who expressed interest in mentoring students they encountered during the training. In this way, the connection between the school and the church is natured and strengthened.

The impact of the restorative approach to anti-bullying was not restricted to the students of AES. The facilitators were profoundly impacted by their interaction with the students. Several of the male facilitators have offered to serve as mentors to boys they encountered. This was especially true in the case of the student John, who shared he did not know the name of his father. For the first time, a few of the facilitators stood face to face with children whose lives were radically different from their own and they were humbled by the experience. The involvement with the students of AES also prompted a few facilitators to get involved with the church’s Wednesday night programming where we serve up to sixty community youth each week.

In follow-up meetings to evaluate the curriculum and overall effectiveness of the training we discovered that the most emphasized recommendation was to extend the length of the training and lesson time for each session. Other considerations included offering the training as an after-school activity as a service to the community and implementing it into our Wednesday night programming with community youth. There were also suggestions for additional supporting materials and role play activities that might help students grasp the information.

The most profound outcome of the project is not the success of implementation or the decrease in the number of bullying incidents at Arlington Elementary School. The best possible outcome has proven to be the awakening of minds and hearts of facilitators who were transformed not by their experience but by the experiences of the children they served. To be transformed by the

experiences of others leads to a deeper understanding of the mission of the church and what it means to do what God requires: to love mercy, do justice and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8) as they serve their community.

VI. Theological Dimension of the Project

Central to the design of this project is the theological importance of restoration and transformation. The Bible is rich in scripture that speaks of God's justice, love, and redeeming grace. The polity and doctrine of the United Methodist Church (UMC) calls for the participation of all Christians to participate in God's liberating and saving action in the world.³⁸ In addition to restoration of victims, offenders must also be presented with an opportunity for restoration and righting the relationship.

The Wesleyan emphasis on grace is as God's divine gift of hope to the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth and the model for how those who proclaim Him as Lord are to love, serve, and share the "good news" of God's redeeming love. It is through and because of God's grace that restoration is *possible* for individuals, communities, nations and even the world.

Jesus was concerned about victims of crime. In the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus explored the responsibility we have for those who have been victimized: "Which of these three, do you think, was neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers? He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise'" (Luke 10:36-37: NRSV).

Jesus was also concerned about offenders, those who victimize others. He rejected vengeance and retribution as the model of justice to being used for relating to offenders: "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; . . ." (Matthew 5:38ff).

³⁸ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* (Washington, DC: United Methodist Publishing House, 2016), 76.

Jesus also indicated the responsibility Christians have for offenders: "I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me . . . Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these . . . you did it to me" (Matthew 25:36, 40).

The Apostle Paul believed that this biblical concept of justice, which was reflected in the life of Christ, was a primary mold of Christian community and responsibility: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us" (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). The biblical concept of justice focuses on the victim, the offender, and the community in the hope of restoring all to a sense of God's wholeness.

The goal then of Disciples of Christ is to continually strive to live a life that patterns the values and ministry of Jesus, and that by doing so we might be transformed to reflect the image of our creator: the image of love. Justice from these perspectives requires us to view justice from a different lens: one of restoration. Justice, through the lens of restoration, involves more than addressing the injuries to the victim because its focus is not just on crime and punishment. Restorative justice focuses on repairing the breach in the relationship that has occurred because of some offense. These breaches occur between people, between people and their community, and between people and God. The in-breaking of God into human history incarnate in Jesus is the gift of God, an offer to repair the breach in the relationship between God and humanity. "Ubuntu: A Restorative Approach to Anti-Bullying" addresses the importance of relationships, effective communications, bullying and how to repair broken relationships as an expression of God's restorative love shared through the congregation of Arlington United Methodist Church.

It is this understanding of God's redeeming love, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the sustaining presence of the Holy Spirit that guided the Anti-Bullying Program at Arlington Elementary School. The response to that shared love of God reaches beyond the school and into the community. Arlington is a medium sized community and it is not uncommon to see students in grocery stores, malls and community events. Facilitators have shared that students will sometimes wave, run to them for a hug, or introduce them to startled parents. They are so proud they know us and that we recognize and acknowledge them. We are grateful that through service to God a child knows that someone cares and is paying attention to their needs and concerns. There seems to be a greater awareness of the church and our commitment to serve the school and community. Many of the teachers commented on the willingness of eighteen people to come serve children and support their efforts in the classroom. Since the implementation of the program some of the facilitators have shared their experiences in Sunday school classes and small groups and the number people seeking information about or offering to serve on the Community Partners team continues to increase. The philosophy of ubuntu, the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth and the grace based theology of the United Methodist Church is embedded in the theology and design of "Ubuntu: A Restorative Approach to Anti-Bullying" and is making a positive impact on the church and school.

VIII. Conclusion

The research design and implementation of "Ubuntu: A Restorative Approach to Anti-Bullying" affirms the claims of this project; restorative justice practices can be employed as an alternative approach to retributive justice to address the issue of bullying in elementary school. It is critical though that age appropriate lessons and supporting materials are used to ensure clear understanding and comprehension. The process of selection of language, lesson design (student

or facilitator centered learning), and supporting materials was one of the most challenging aspects in design of the curriculum.

While the implementation was successful, it was not without challenges, the most important being a need for more time for the individual lessons. Additionally, the curriculum may be more effective if it were presented over a full semester (nine weeks rather than six weeks). This would provide more time for instruction and student interaction. Key to the curriculum method and instructional style is an emphasis on student-centered learning through discovery, critical thinking, and hands on application of learned skills. These conclusions, however, may not be the most important of what was learned in the development of this project. In fact, the research revealed unexpected data that raises new questions relating to academic achievement, student behavior, and school climate.

Arlington Elementary School, as indicated in Table 4, has 295 total enrolled students and is a very small school in comparison to an average of 618 total student enrollments in Florida elementary schools. The student-teacher ratio for AES is 13:1 and the guidance counselor-student ratio is 295:1. Both are significantly lower than 14.5:1 and 603:1, respectively, in comparison to state averages. The question that begs to be asked is: “Why is a school that has low teacher/counselor-student ratios and low student enrollment, considered ideal by education practitioners, failing?” Additionally, the research revealed that both student absenteeism (26% of students missed 15+ days) and the number of missed work days by teachers (72% of 18 missed 10+ days) far exceeded the state and national averages (38% and 23%). What factors, if any, are reflected in the extraordinary rates of absenteeism by students and teachers? The demographic data in these two areas were startling and provided fresh light on a systemic problem and was a clarion call for the members of the Community Partners Team.

The church's commitment to the children is a response to the love and grace they have received from Jesus Christ. With more questions than answers there is a growing number of members of AUMC, many already involved with the school, that realize that bullying may be the symptom of larger issues at the school and community at large. There is also a realization that the changes needed to help the school and community is not our battle to fight alone. It will take the work of the parents, and the community to assist the students of AES reach their full potential as well as a grass root movement to awaken the community.

Although this project is created to meet the requirements of the Doctor of Ministry degree, it is also a vital part of our ministry with Arlington Elementary School (AES). Many of the students of Arlington Elementary also participate in church programs on a regular basis. We are aware of many of their needs and stories and gladly render aid whenever possible. With that knowledge, participation in this project opened the eyes of the facilitators to the very real needs of children who are struggling to survive in circumstances they did not create. Additionally, the project has illumined a window of opportunity for AUMC to be a community witness, to reach out to other churches, businesses and non-profits to partner with them as we work together as a community to change the lives of children and witness to the agape love of Jesus Christ.

The project is complete and the journey continues. Arlington Elementary, our community partner, is struggling more than we thought. There are already discussions amongst team members, meetings scheduled with the AES leadership, and a growing sense of urgency to act now! Twelve years ago, Arlington United Methodist Church began a process that provided an opportunity to examine and reassess their mission, vision, and purpose. It was that process that began a transformation that reminded, renewed, and revived the inwardly turned congregation to one that is intentionally outward focused. Several of the facilitators for this project also

participated in the Refocus process and shared that this experience affirmed the importance of understanding the church's active and purposeful involvement in the community it served. We are compelled to help, not because of pity for the children or the myriad of circumstances they confront daily. We are compelled to help because serving the least and the lost, the broken and forgotten, and children the world has forgotten glorifies and honors the name of God.

Glossary

bullying. Bullying is when someone is being hurt repeatedly, either by words or actions, feel bad because of it, and has a hard time stopping what is happening to them. Although it is a form of aggressive or violent behavior, four aspects of bullying separate it from other aggressive or violent behaviors:

1. The behavior stems from an intent to cause fear, distress, or harm;
2. The behavior is repeated over time;
3. There is a real or perceived imbalance of power between the bully and the victim; and
4. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological/relational.

cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is the use of technology—internet, email, cell phones, social media, pictures—to hurt or harm someone else.

community partner/faith-based partnerships. Unites a variety of faith-based partners to enhance the academic, physical, spiritual and social well-being of Duval County Public School students. The Department of Family and Community Engagement works alongside the Faith-based Council to identify organizations that will assist schools in reaching goals and objectives outlined in School Improvement Plans. Faith-based Partnerships promote collaboration and sharing of resources and information between faith-based, community groups, schools and parents.

restorative justice. Crime and wrongdoing is a violation of people and relationships. It creates obligations to make things right. Justice involves the victim, the offender, and the community in search for solutions which promote repair, reconciliation, and reassurance.

restorative justice circles. Restorative justice circles are rooted in the belief that circles are helpful for building community in which all members feel connected and respected. Restorative justice circles address harm by employing three questions; What happened? Who has been harmed? How? and what needs to happen to repair the harm?

retributive justice. Crime and wrongdoing are violations against laws/rules. It focuses on what laws/rules have been broken, that blame must be apportioned (who did it?) and punishment must be imposed (what do they deserve?).

title 1 school. Title I, Part A, provides local educational agencies (LEA) resources that help children gain a high-quality education and the skills to master the [Florida Standards](#). Title I provides additional resources to schools with economically disadvantaged students. These resources provide additional teachers, professional development, extra time for teaching, parent involvement activities, and other activities designed to raise student achievement. Two models are used in Title I schools to provide these services. Schoolwide reform models provide all students with access to services. Targeted assistance models provide services to select students in Title I schools.

ubuntu. Philosophy. Ubuntu is very difficult to render into a Western language. It speaks of the very essence of being human. When we want to give high praise to someone we say, “*Yu, u nobuntu*”; “Hey, so-and-so has *ubuntu*.” Then you are generous, you are hospitable, you are friendly and caring and compassionate. It is to say, “My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up in yours.”

Meaning. A person with ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are.

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