Restorative Practices Application

School: Nokomis Montessori North

Restorative Practice Application Team Members: Melissa McCollor, Terri Jackson, Leslie Young, Erica Schatzlein, McKenna Richards, Danielle Blehm, Katerina Youngberg, Kristin Kantola and Deb Horne.

Selected appointment time for presentation of application and fielding of Q and A from RP Steering Committee: January 24, 2018 | 4:50 P.M.

Note: This year we have removed a word count limit for each section. Please engage in tables, bullet points, outlines, narrative and related images. Your audience includes members of the Restorative Practice Steering Committee: district representation, SPFT representation, community members/leaders, parent and family voice and students.

Section 1: Your school the need, strengths

1. Please provide us with a description of your school, the students, community and staff. You are welcome and invited to present this in as creative a modality as possible.

Montessori and Restorative Practices

Montessori and Restorative Practices have linked roots. Both grow out of respect for each child as being a gift full of opportunity and promise. Montessori and Restorative Practices both believe that if you honor children, give them a voice, and teach them how to use that voice, their true, peaceful, constructive, creative talents will be able to flow. Montessori does not believe in rewards or punishments, but natural consequences, and that one of these natural consequences is moving through conflict together.

When our students greet our staff each morning, it is overwhelmingly by our first names, which may or may not be preceded by a "Ms." or "Mr." This is not out of a sense of familiarity, lacking respect, or a lenient school climate, but rather comes out of a place of relationship. As a Montessori school, we place the humanity of our students alongside our own humanity as staff, without the need to reassert staff’s authority roles in the classroom. Knowing our students individually and intimately to create and maintain positive relationships is at the forefront of our belief system as a Montessori staff.

Our youngest four year old learners are trusted with tasks of responsibility, such as sweeping, table washing, and watering plants. As our students grow, they are trusted to guide and lead the younger students. Our Montessori classrooms are reflective of a space where learning is done alongside and with students, sitting on the floor for a lesson with an individual child or a small group of multi-age students, instead of a type of education that is done to students. Rarely does content instruction occur in whole group lessons, but like Maria Montessori, we use group lessons for deep spirited
growth and mindfulness activities that bring out the best in all children while making them aware of the needs and strengths of each other in order to build a better community.

Montessori and Restorative Practices are intertwined in the values they share. As staff have begun to explore, inquire, and engage in restorative practices, some teachers have had the affirmation that restorative practices "names" a way of being they have been inhabiting all along. Others have reflected on how naturally restorative practices integrate into a Montessori environment. Still others are at the wondering and curiosity stage, but overwhelmingly staff have embraced the authentic relationships at the center of both Montessori and Restorative Practices.

Nokomis Montessori
When our campus expanded to be a dual mirror campus program five years ago, we had the opportunity to update our logo and have a dialogue about the essence of our school community. Our logo has three roots at the bottom of the tree, representing the three levels of Montessori: Children’s House (pre-k and kindergarten), Elementary I (1st, 2nd, 3rd grade), and Elementary II (4th & 5th grade). It also has a peace dove in the tree, symbolic of the often repeated phrase that “Nokomis is a peaceful place to learn.” Commitment to peace is an inherent part of Montessori.

Students
As a magnet school, Nokomis Montessori serves the east side of St. Paul. While some families choose our school because it utilizes the Montessori approach, others choose it because of the reputation of our school in their families and communities. Our students bring massive amounts of “cultural capital” to school with them each day, with 47% of our students being multilingual learners, and representing many racial and cultural identities, including 56% Asian, 12% Black, 5% Latino, and 27% white. Additionally, 65% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch.

Our students learn from one another in multi-age classrooms, seeing their peers as learners and teachers. Our classes partner with one another and come together regularly for reading buddies, art projects, and partner teas. The Partner Tea is an example of older students leading and supporting younger students by helping to serve food, carry table conversation, and complete a small project in partnership.

Community
Our Hmong CLAnD (Culture, Literacy, Art, and Dance) program invites and welcomes Hmong as well as students of other racial and cultural backgrounds to learn the Hmong language, art, dance, authentic Hmong food and customs. Our Hmong New Year celebration, attended by hundreds of families is a classic example of how we work at connecting with our community.

Nokomis Fun Fair is a service learning project planned and put on by our Elementary II students, families, and teachers to raise money for field trips and art residencies, and it is attended by current
families as well as so many past students that we began an "alumni room" as part of the evening's activities.

Relationships
There is a common thread of relationships woven within our school, students, families, and community. Relationships are the foundation of our work as a Montessori elementary school, making connections with our students both on an academic and non-academic level, outreach with our families and our community as partners for our students and their education, as well as between staff. As a Montessori school, our students have three teachers during their elementary career. This fosters a unique, consistent relationship between students, families, and their teachers. These relationships and connections encourage deeper conversations about growth and development, and enduring partnerships that benefit all.

But, like all dynamic learning environments, these relationships falter. They undergo transition, such as when our program expanded to two campuses, welcoming many, new staff. Relationships include conflict, which is a natural part of the complexity of learning in community. Children experience trauma, which cannot be separated from their daily learning experience. And if Montessori and Restorative Practices have linked roots, with the reoccurring priority placed on relationships, then naturally our focus as a staff as we approach Restorative Practices is to determine how it will create, nurture, and repair the relationships between students, staff, and families as we strive for a peaceful Nokomis learning environment.

2. Describe needs and strengths through:

   a. Data (Including ODR, ISS/OSS, attendance rates, MSS or 5E data on students experiences with school and safety etc., disaggregated, whenever possible)

Office Discipline Referrals
Terri Jackson, the new assistant principal, who was the Restorative Practice Coach at Riverview Elementary, meets with 100 percent of the students with ODRs. Restorative questions and processes are always used for students to listen, understand, reflect, and grow from. Every situation is an opportunity for learning and problem solving in the hopes of deepening each child’s repertoire of strategies to persevere through challenges of everyday life, foster more empathy, and truly understand and value others perspectives. In mid-December, we overheard two students who just finished a harm-repair small circle exclaim, “That was not scary at all! Ms. Terri just helps us solve problems!” This reaction from two students reinforced the purpose around using Restorative Practices with all of our ODRs. It takes ODRs to a place where students have the opportunity to reflect, grow, and make changes.
b. Anecdotes or stories that exemplify the needs you hope to address and/or strengths you plan to build on through whole school implementation of restorative practices.

Our program expanded five years ago due to a high demand from east side families for a Montessori learning environment and consistently long waiting lists. We expanded to dual mirror campuses, which required hiring ten new Montessori teachers from 2013 to 2016. Thus, we have many probationary staff. In addition, we opened six new Montessori classrooms and replaced four Montessori teachers.

One teacher, our experienced special education teacher who joined our community after 17 years in the district, speaks about the radical welcome present at Nokomis and how our community is a unique one. Instead of her previous role as the special education teacher in a pull-out model consisting of continually trying to track down teachers to offer her expertise and ideas for supporting her students, staff were seeking her out from the beginning, wanting to best meet the needs of our students, everyone's students. Being the only special education teacher on a staff has
the potential to be isolating, as she experienced in other schools, but she has found that the Nokomis is a different type of community.

That being said, we have a continued need for the development of staff relationships and feel Restorative Practices is ideally suited to meet this need. At the same time, there is also a need for the opportunity for authentic relationships amongst staff to be created and supported. Multiple staff have shared that after attending a one or two day RP training last year, “That was the first time I have had the opportunity to hear the thoughts and perspectives of a co-worker I have been working with for years!” We began to think: If that is the type of transformation that could occur during one or two days in circles, imagine the transformation that could occur in a staff that invites Restorative Practices and engages in circles with intentionality.

We began to make small changes, such as facilitating some staff meetings sitting in circles and opening other staff meetings in circle. These changes were met with positive response from staff. But, in order for true transformation of staff culture and relationships to occur, we need dedicated time and the invitation to participate in the process. When asked during a staff meeting held in circle, focused on Restorative Practices, to include voices and inform this application, many, many staff communicated that their hope and dream would be to have RP training on-site, with all staff, to know more and build relationships with one another. Our staff as a whole is open and ready to engage. They see the linked roots between their initial experience with RP and their values and beliefs as a Montessori educator. Our teaching assistants observe and participate in circles being held in classrooms and witness the necessary power of relationships in their daily work with students. TAs were invited to attend introductory Restorative Practices training in December, and many readily accepted this invitation.

After staff training, we started holding circles regularly for students. This worked well as opening and closing circles, as well as community building circles. It has been more of a challenge with circles to repair harm. Our students have had some experience with circles to repair harm, and reflected on their overall effectiveness in repairing relationships and strengthening the class. At the same time, it has been a challenge when students ask for circles at a time when trained staff is not available, or not available promptly enough. We also need support and staffing that allows for effective pre-conferencing, and staff to be present during the circle, or to cover a classroom so that the involved teacher can be present in the circle. We have heavily placed the focus on year one on our staff, our relationships with one another, our belief systems and agreements, and common language across our school, focused around Restorative Practices.

3. What changes in school climate would most positively impact your school community? Please include narrative or example from the lens of educator, parent and families, leadership and student voice.

Staff, family, and student voices were invited as part of this application process and the exploration of next steps for the Nokomis Restorative Practices journey.
Family Voice
Themes that emerged throughout the family responses were the wish that students learn conflict resolution and communication skills that will serve students into adolescence and adulthood. For example, one parent shared, “Changes in school climate would be to use Restorative Practices to address smaller and larger issues. I think now more than ever, children need to be taught how to address when they feel wronged and have the opportunity to address the person or persons who have hurt them. But they also need to be taught forgiveness since we need to work and interact with the same people in our communities.” Another parent shared, “RP elevates students’ voices so that their concerns are respectfully addressed and they become an integral part of the problem solving process.” Families consistently shared values that we as staff also hold in high regard, such as the importance of student voice being invited and heard in all of the spaces of our school. A parent of a very quiet, reserved student shared, “I think restorative practice is a great way for kids to learn to take turns speaking and listening. I believe it’ll strengthen kids vocally. Growing up as a kid I believed what I thought and felt didn’t matter because I was just a kid. So practicing restorative circles will allow students to feel like they have a voice and that what they have to say does matter. I’d like to see that students learn that listening is just as important as speaking.”

Student Voice
As educators at a rather beginning level of implementing restorative practices, we are continually reminded in our circle experiences of the power of each students’ presence, whether that presence is a space of listening and belonging or whether it is their voice being heard and honored in the circle. Our students share that in circle they feel heard, calm, empowered, respected, and proud.

Some of their favorite parts of circle are: “I feel like I can open up and share my feelings and thoughts to people I can trust.” “We get to hear honest thoughts,” and “Saying what you want to say and you know that people are listening.” These statements are from a classroom doing community circles as well as some circles to repair harm. Imagine the school climate that could exist when all classrooms are invited to engage in the Restorative Practices journey.

Staff Voice
One classroom educator shared, “I keep thinking of one my students’ faces when I think about this work. He is a child who has difficult home life and often explodes in anger. He is also bright eyed and excited to help and learn. He needs me to be skilled enough to help him manage his emotions and bring him back to learning. He needs me to be skilled enough to gently and kindly help him hear how his behavior affects his friends, so that he can slowly, without shame, learn new ways to handle his feelings as they ebb and flow. I believe that Restorative Practices training will help me build the skills to meet this boy and so many of our students' needs.”

An E1 Classroom teacher shared with us: “I have my circle during my morning meetings and I have two students who are mostly nonverbal. During that time in circle, these two students use the talking piece and respond in one word. This has been very meaningful to me because it is showing me that they are expressing their feelings and feel comfortable enough to share with their classmates.”
School Climate Changes
A parent shared, “One of the reasons I like Nokomis is the sense of community and focus on social learning as well as cognitive learning. I feel Nokomis already does a fantastic job of cultivating a very positive, connected school community. I feel implementing Restorative Practices school wide would only further enhance the strong base that is already laid and provide a continuity for students.”

Because of the multi-age nature of our classrooms, students are with each teacher for two or three years, having a total of three teachers from pre-k to 5th grade. Students visit their previous teachers, often daily, to check in or to volunteer in the classroom, and these relationships are continued far after the student leaves that classroom and even after they matriculate to another school.

Our Montessori environment inherently supports strong relationships, but we also know that relationships require time, intention, and at times, repair. We know our students experience trauma and as a school participating in professional development to become “trauma-informed,” we realize the importance of predictable, loving relationships for each of the students, but especially children who have or are experiencing trauma. In classrooms where teachers have created space, voice, and student ownership in the circle process, students now request the circle process to repair friendship relationships, to solve conflict, and to better understand one another’s perspectives.

Montessori philosophy has a tenet to “follow the child,” a value that informs our differentiated, instruction, and the way we honor the humanity and individuality of our students, but, the reality of our current staffing is that we cannot always “follow the child,” despite our best intentions. It is difficult to honor these student requests for circles in a timely manner, to dedicate the uninterrupted time to fully engage in the circle process, or to respond with supports to students’ trauma and difficult situations that are shared in circle. We need increased staff to build capacity in our building to respond to the needs of students experiencing trauma and to provide circles when students ask for opportunity to restore relationships.

School response to discipline has often been something done “to” students. Nokomis has had a steady shift towards a more restorative “with” approach. We’ve changed our “discipline referral” to contain relationship based interventions to behavior challenges, such as conferences with the student. With our licensed staff, we created “Check and Connect,” where teachers can suggest students who would benefit from a positive adult relationship and staff pair up with an individual student to provide positive interactions and check-ins, essentially a positive, proactive relationship as opposed to often the reactive interactions students may have. The natural, progressive next step to our mindset about discipline is restorative practices. It creates a powerful sense of belonging as well as a framework for navigating the often messy dynamics of learning and problem solving in community. Restorative Practices provides an alternative to a school behavioral approach that is exclusionary and disproportionately affects students of color to an approach that is inclusive and focuses on repairing harm, restoring relationships, and honoring the humanity of our students.

Section 2: Capacity and Understanding of Restorative Practices
4. Describe the capacity of the school site for a new school-wide initiative, including leadership, engagement of staff, students, parents and family, community and experiences with implementation, including:

   a. **Existing knowledge about and experience with implementation/adoption of new initiatives.**

   **Social Emotional Support**

   Here at Nokomis, we are committed to social-emotional support. Through school wide collaboration, over the past few years we implemented school-wide behavior expectations, the Zones of Regulation, and MeMoves. Numerous staff participated in Innocent Classroom training. Afterwards, staff reported viewing interactions with students differently, and implemented changes in communication in continuous attempts to see and hear our students. Over the past year our staff has been participating in trauma informed schools trainings as part of our staff meetings. We have participated in presentations that provide the basics of trauma responses in students, read and discussed articles, and have met in small groups to discuss how this learning affects our classrooms and students.

   Our implementation of school-wide behavior expectations, the Zones of Regulation, and MeMoves align and set the foundation for Restorative Practices. These new initiatives are not stand alone tools. Our students need more staff to help support their behavior and social-emotional well being.

   b. **Existing teams, or lack thereof, that could take up RP implementation (e.g., PBIS, SCIT) and their accomplishments.**

   Currently, our Leadership, Family Engagement, PBIS and NCAT (SCIT) teams are collaborating to champion, plan, and implement Professional Development and support our present levels of Restorative Practices. Over half of our team attended Multi-day RP training last summer and fall to continue to grow their own practice and support colleagues. These team members are intentional about collaboration and reflection on the successes and challenges within Restorative Practices with their immediate team members, as members of their various leadership teams, and across the building. As collaborative teams we have a variety of disciplines represented and multiple perspectives with which to analyze current and future practice through data and narrative.

   c. **Track records of engaging community parents, family and other stakeholders in school climate improvements.**

   Here at Nokomis, we strive to find ways to connect our community and parents. Last year, in an effort to provide more opportunities for partnership, we started our Nokomis Climate Advisory Team (formerly the SCIT team). Families, community members, and staff meet monthly over pot luck to discuss pertinent issues to continue to build relationships, and strengthen climate. This year, we are holding our meetings in Circles. One parent recently shared, "I've grown in my
confidence to share and speak by being in Circles. I’ve never been so involved in my child’s education like I am now.” Another parent shared, “I want to learn more about Restorative Practices so I can use it at home!” These anecdotal stories are examples of how we track the impact of Restorative Practices, along with gathering formal data to assess for outcomes of our collaborative climate progress.

d. The approval process you used in deciding to pursue this funding. Please include what survey or other process and invitation for adult, student voice and other perspectives were engaged.

Achieving high teacher and licensed staff buy-in was essential in moving forward in applying to become a Restorative Practice Pilot site. This process began by having eight educators and both administrators attend a SCIT training in November of 2016. This group then created a SCIT team, including Nokomis parents. To form the SCIT team, staff made an effort to involve community members who would represent the racial and socioeconomic diversity of our school. After exploring the idea of Restorative Practices with an introductory training for three staff, and an all-staff visit from the SPPS Restorative Practices Coordinator, the SCIT team then conducted a survey of all Nokomis North licensed staff to provide feedback on moving forward with the Restorative Practices Practice Pilot Site Application. We had a 100% yes response for a Restorative Practices Application.

Our desire to infuse Restorative Practices with our Montessori philosophy only deepened after not having the opportunity to become a pilot site last year. Over half of our staff took multi-day Restorative Practices trainings in the summer of 2017, and others attended the MDE RP summer institute. We were able to add Theresa Jackson, a Restorative Practices coordinator from Riverview, as our new assistant principal. Terri has strengthened our use of Restorative Practices, using Circles for staff meetings, ODRs, parent conferences, and classroom circles. Terri leads by example, creating partnerships between classrooms, families and the community. Her guidance has been extremely valuable as we continue to implement and grow with our Restorative Practices.

5. What is the current knowledge and opinion about RP in the school, among staff, admin, students, family and community? How do you know what they know or feel? Describe any introductory professional development in restorative practices your building has engaged in, strategic steps you have already taken to create a restorative culture (including among adults) or existing pockets or restorative programming and how they have been received. For example, if your school has previously applied to become an RP site, what has been implemented, what has been learned and how is this application a reflection of those shifts?
   ● A sample survey has been provided in the Schoology course.
Our staff and administration are eager to continue down the path we have started towards being a building with a fully restorative culture. Our licensed staff survey returned a 100% "yes" rate for applying to be a Restorative Practices pilot site. Our administration is eager and on board. Last spring and summer, staff participated in circle trainings. This has resulted in all 28 licensed staff participating in at least one RP training so far. Our administration participates in community and staff circles, and work to dedicate funds to make Restorative Practice professional development accessible to all staff.

Section 3: Strategy and planned activities

6. Describe your overall strategy to ensure that implementing restorative practices will positively impact your school’s overall climate through the following prompts:

a. What is the primary purpose of implementing restorative practices at your school?

We at Nokomis agree with the “underlying premise of restorative practices,” which “is that people are happier, more cooperative, more productive and more likely to make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things WITH them rather than TO them or FOR them” (The Restorative Practice Handbook, Costello and Wachtel).

The primary purpose of implementing restorative practices is to deepen our practice of circle keeping and relationship building and repairing at Nokomis North, as it aligns beautifully with Montessori beliefs and philosophy. We are deeply committed in honoring each child as a valued member of our community. This alignment has allowed for an easy early implementation in our Montessori classrooms. We see how restorative practices is a natural way of being, helping deepen relationships by understanding multiple perspectives, resulting in a more compassionate, caring and cohesive community. As a school, we all work diligently at creating a trusting environment, where our staff, students, and families have a safe space to speak, be heard, share, and learn.

b. What resources and experiences guided your school’s design of an implementation plan? What about your school supports a unique and innovative approach to restorative practices implementation?

There are many resources and individuals guiding our schools design of implementation. Over the last year and a half, staff have continued to see our Restorative Practices professional development expanding, leading to new ideas and implementation. Examples include:

- Staff leadership within our building.
- Various Circle Trainings.
- Positive stories from students and staff experiences.
- School visits to Restorative Practice Pilot site.
We are fortunate at Nokomis to have Terri Jackson’s experience and leadership with Restorative Practices. Recognizing her knowledge gives us tools and guidance to make our process natural, but at the same time we recognize that the process needs to be organic to our own school environment and that what works for one community may not work for us at Nokomis. With that said, we want to embrace a growth mindset in terms of preconceived goals within our timelines. As we continue to evolve in our story, we are reminded of our commitment to keeping our students at the center of our vision. Our RP smart goals and outcomes serves as guides for us to lead the work, and we are committed to continuous progress monitoring to meet the needs of our students, staff, and the extended Nokomis families.

c. Who will lead implementation? What leadership model will be used and why?

When we think about our Restorative Practice Team at Nokomis North, it is essential that we recognize that all members of our community are part of the Restorative Practice Team. When it comes to training and implementing Restorative Practices, all staff are part of the process.

The Restorative Practice Coordinator, in collaboration with our administration, along with our leadership team, will lead implementation. Additionally, all Nokomis staff, students, and families will be involved in the implementation of Restorative Practices.

Our vision is to have a Restorative Practices responding team that consists of two SCSP leads and three floating TAs to support our students as needed in addition to their classroom teachers. The responding team are the staff members who will be available throughout the day to support students and teachers. Our two SCSP leads would work closely with our administration to plan and provide professional development, lead staff, classroom circles, and guide the Restorative Practices TAs in the building. The TAs would travel within a designated level (CH, E1, E2) and foster community building as a proactive resource as well as a repairing harm resource. Having a consistent TA within each level will reinforce relationships and behaviors amongst students and our Restorative Practice Team. We want students to have the opportunity to thrive in an environment that is calm and safe, where students are heard, and where they know what steps are taken to maintain meaningful relationships.

In addition to staff leadership, we want to build student leadership. Restorative practices is not just something we want our students to use while at Nokomis. We are building capacity. We are teaching life long skills of listening, empathy, respecting differences and multiple points of view. We want this to be carried on with our students when they leave for sixth grade. Having E2 fifth graders lead circles in Children’s House, E1, and E2 is an opportunity for them to build on their skills, gain confidence, build relationships, and help our community grow and strengthen. In addition, we want incorporate student voice and choice during our circles to give students an opportunity to lead a circle or share a concern.
Our pathway school is Parkway Montessori, a current Restorative Practice pilot site. As a pilot site, we would lay the foundation for the students to transition successfully to middle school equipped with the RP tools and skills gained from Nokomis.

7. What specific action steps or activities will you and your school take?

a. Provide a summary of what activities will happen throughout the three years of the pilot, so that, by the end of three years, you will have a sustainable and effective restorative practice program throughout the school.

**Year one**
- Continued Restorative Practice training to staff, students, families and community stakeholders through regular communication such as newsletters, NCAT meetings, and our school website.
- Professional development for *all* staff (licensed and non-licensed) in principles, practices and procedures of Restorative Practices.
- Modeling of Restorative Circles.
- Daily use of Circle to welcome and repair at the classroom and for specific events.

**Year Two**
- Continue everything from year one.
- Continual sharing of information to all stakeholders through regular communication.
- Professional development aligned with needs assessment.
- MDE training continues for RP Coordinator and Team.
- Regular Circle opportunities for families and communities.
- Refresher training for continuing staff plus foundational training for new staff members.
- Classroom instruction, modeling and daily use of Restorative Circles.

**Year Three**
- Continue everything from year one and year two.
- Community partnerships.
- Parent trainings.
- Student led Circles.

b. Provide a detailed scope of work for Year 1, including summer months and PD days, detailing how you will embed professional development and build staff capacity. What plan for PLCs and ongoing coaching do you have? What is your communications plan? Will you do a policy review or other building level work? How will you engage an Election to Work Agreement to support all educators in professional development and implementation engagement?
Our primary focus of year one is the frequency of implementation, with our secondary focus being the outcome measures in regards to effectiveness. Anecdotal data will be kept through ongoing PD, staff meetings, reflective team meetings, and monthly NCAT gatherings.

Spring 2018
- Both a survey and one on one interviews with representatives from each stakeholder group will occur to reflect on year one and provide feedback for the upcoming year.
- Staff will receive Training from MN DoE and spend 2 days planning for a detailed roll out during the summer.
  - Professional development will be provided for all building staff (including custodial, office and cafeteria staff) during or prior to opening week.
  - We will host Community Family Circle where parents can learn about restorative practice from being in a Circle.
  - We will partner with community experts to co-keep circles with staff, focused student groups, and at our family listening sessions.

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<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer 2018</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>MDE Training - Restorative Practice End of June 2018</td>
<td>Staff will be given the opportunity to attend the MDE Training at the end of June. We will survey staff who attend through Google Forms to gather post training feedback. We will also engage in a Circle to reflect on what we learned and make action plans for the year.</td>
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<td>IIRP Conferences</td>
<td>In August, some staff will attend the International Institute of Restorative Practice conference, which is being held in St. Paul.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-Day Restorative Practice Retreat</td>
<td>Before returning in August, we will be having a two-day retreat for all staff at Nokomis Montessori- North.</td>
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<td><strong>Fall, Winter, Spring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Circles for SAT, child study, leadership, staff, conferences</td>
<td>These meetings will conducted in Circles. This will be slowly implemented, with the goal of all meetings being held in Circles by Spring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ongoing Professional Development</td>
<td>Ongoing professional development opportunities will occur for all staff embedded in staff/team meetings, and non-student contact days for paraprofessionals.</td>
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<td>Community Members</td>
<td>Invite community Circle leaders who reflect the population of our students and families. Newsletters will include information about the progress of circle in each individual classroom in order to introduce and include families in the process.</td>
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Exploration with circles (welcome back, repairing harm, academic)

| Staff will explore keeping circles in their class as they see fit. Staff will connect and collaborate their experiences amongst each other. |

**c. Beyond funding for a Restorative Practice specific leadership position, how will the building staff actively support the implementation process? What specific and additional collaborative and supportive spaces will lead Restorative Practices in partnership with the RP leadership?**

Our Nokomis team is committed, and will actively contribute to and participate in the implementation process in a variety of ways. In June of 2017, we hired a new assistant principal, Terri Jackson. She was previously a Restorative Practice coordinator, and is very passionate about this process. Terri uses the Restorative Practices process with every single ODR case, using effective dialogue and harm repairing Circles. Our staff meetings increasingly start or close in Circles, as well as all of the Nokomis Climate Advisory Team meetings.

Our leadership team aligns everything to the SCIP. Restorative Practices was added into the SCIP, a living document guiding what we do. In the past year, we went from having 6 licensed staff trained to all 28 licensed staff members taking some kind of Restorative Practices professional development. Upon our site visits pilot sites, our teachers immediately wrote grants and successfully received sensory and calming materials from donors choose.

Looking ahead, we have 100% staff buy in to continue our Restorative Practice journey. We are actively deepening and strengthening our Restorative Practices, embedding this into day to day life at Nokomis. When discussing again applying for the Restorative Practice Pilot Site Grant, staff took the initiative to make their voice heard, advocating for their colleagues, students and families. We all agreed that we are partners in this process, and moving forward, we are ready to support Restorative Practices through leadership, collaboration, and continued learning.

**d. How will multiple stakeholders be engaged? Please specifically describe how you will include parents, community perspectives and youth voice. What outreach have you made to potential trainers, circle keepers and guides for this work?**

All stakeholders connected to the Nokomis community will be engaged in the process of implementing Restorative Practices in the coming years. All Nokomis staff will be trained more in depth about Restorative Practices. Our staff will lead and model the practices and language for students and families. Restorative Practices will be embedded in our daily rituals and routines for students and staff. Families will have opportunities to engage in Circles and learn about RP through their children. Our NCAT, Nokomis Climate Advisory Team, which consists of parents, community members, and staff, meets monthly in Circles to discuss pertinent issues that impact the climate and
cultural events of our school community. NCAT will be an integral collaborative partner in providing RP trainings for our families. We would also like to reach out to the community to partner with Circle keepers who reflect the population of our students and serve as a role model for our community.

**Section 4: Evaluation**

8. Collecting accurate data is an important part of this pilot initiative. Please specifically describe your school’s strengths and opportunities for growth as relates to:

   a. **Consistently and accurately collecting ODR data.**

   As a strength, Nokomis Montessori is grounded in collecting and analyzing the data, to allow for best practices in meeting the needs of all students. We are a highly reflective staff; we constantly engage in reflecting on what has been successful, as well as how we can improve. Currently, our Campus, as well as SWIS, only track negative behavior data. We will need to create an alternative, school-based data-collection tool to track our positive response data which aligns with restorative practices.

   Nokomis is welcoming to all who enter. That feeling shows in the way we greet each other as staff, our students and families, and guests and visitors. It sounds like students and staff expressing their hopes, dreams, fears, and challenges openly in Circle during the school day, and later in the day it will sound like parents, staff, and community members sharing their experiences together in Nokomis Climate Advisory Team gatherings. It sounds like children being children — which can include laughter, speaking, singing, and sometimes tears - and those children being heard. As a Restorative school, Nokomis looks like students and teachers working together in small groups, openly sharing thoughts and ideas. This sharing is more open and honest because of the depth of relationships built in circle.

   b. **Collecting and using school climate data.**

   We value daily reflections to acknowledge what we are doing well and what we need to work on at Nokomis. Our leadership team has invested in the continuous school improvement process. We are open to feedback and evaluating where we are at and where we need to be. An area of growth for us is collecting data, both quantitative and qualitative, focused on the use of trauma informed approaches to support students in crisis. Our current data from SWIS reveals our students who have experienced trauma receive the most ODRs. Restorative Practices will help build trust and community, especially for our students who do not have the foundational skills to form healthy relationships due to the trauma they have experienced. Community Building Circles will help all students to foster more empathy as they gain more understanding about other’s perspectives and
stories. We hope that by implementing circles when conflict has occurred, students will have more tools to build relationships and navigate issues, thus reducing their ODRs.

9. Describe your proposed evaluation plan.

   a. What indicators/benchmarks do you expect to see in year 1? How will you collect the data? Consider both narrative and quantitative data?

   Our primary goal in year one is to come together to embrace restorative practices as our way of being. We want to honor that this is a process rather than a simplistic solution. One indicator of our success will be an end of year survey taken from ALL staff to get feedback on both their knowledge, beliefs and current use of restorative practice. Our monthly NCAT team meetings will also be a crucial platform for us to gather feedback from families. In addition to a survey, we will conduct interviews with stakeholders to assess their current perspective on our school needs and determine if any modifications or adaptations need to be made to our current plan for years two and three. We will interview at least two individuals from each stakeholder group: students, families, community partners, administration, classroom teachers, licensed support staff, and paraprofessionals.

   b. What outcomes do you expect to see by the end of Year 3? How will you collect the data? Consider both narrative and quantitative data? Consider both narrative and quantitative data?

   Our hopes and dreams at Nokomis Montessori by the end of Year 3 is to have sustainable restorative practice strategies in place and embedded in our school community. We will collect data throughout the process and monitor and adjust as needed to ensure that we are implementing restorative practice strategies with fidelity. We are hoping by year 3 of implementation, we will see an increase in outcomes, both in quantitative data, such as increased academic growth and decreased ODRs as well as qualitative, such as increased social-emotional health and stronger relationships among staff and students. The Nokomis Leadership Team and Nokomis Climate Advisory Team will be monitoring our work and paving the necessary path for us to live our mission and reach our vision. Academic data, behavioral data, and surveys (students, staff, and community) will be the prime sources of data. Using the data cycle process, we will establish SMART goals to ensure that the restorative practices are being implemented and positively impacting our students’ learning and the overall climate of Nokomis. Our SMART goals will be visible to our staff, our students, and to our community.

Section 5: Budget & Budget Justification

10. Provide a detailed budget and describe how your budget will help you implement restorative practices and achieve your goals. How will you use the funds so that all the adults in the school learn restorative practices and use them? Expectations: Schools are welcome to allocate 5-10% of total budget request for evaluation, especially if that is an area for growth. School sites must allocate a percentage of their budget dollars for professional
development for all staff. Please also describe whether additional building budget dollars will support implementation of RP.

The following is a graph outlining our budget. We have allocated the largest amount of money to our two leads. After visiting Maxfield Elementary, we are motivated to create our own version of the “Green Room” - The Nest. We were inspired by our close community and logo, to make a safe landing spot for our students in need of extra support. We have also allocated money to professional development, training materials, and evaluation. Money unused by our outlined budget will be put towards additional professional development and sensory items for classrooms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restorative Practice Leads (two 1.0 SCSPs)</td>
<td>$100,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipends for Teachers (summer and after school training)</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>$7,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP Training Materials</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Room - The Nest</td>
<td>$7,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>$1000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 6: Summary

11. Why should your school be selected as restorative practices pilot site? You are encouraged to innovate your presentation and to actively include multiple voices and perspectives.

We are ready. Our staff, students, and community are ready! Listen to the voices conveyed on our Nokomis Montessori North Video.

We hope that through reading our application and watching our video you have a understanding of where Nokomis Montessori North has come from, where we are currently, and our vision for the future with Restorative Practices. Our belief is that children all have an intrinsic desire for deep
connection, and for meaning and purpose. We know that adults share this: staff, family, and community members are striving for the same relationships and relevance each day.

Thank you for considering Nokomis Montessori North as a restorative practices pilot site.

**Restorative Practices Application**

**School:** Nokomis Montessori North

**Restorative Practice Application Team Members:** Melissa McCollor, Terri Jackson, Leslie Young, Erica Schatzlein, McKenna Richards, Danielle Blehm, Katerina Youngberg, Kristin Kantola and Deb Horne.

**Selected appointment time for presentation of application and fielding of Q and A from RP Steering Committee:** January 24, 2018 | 4:50 P.M.

**Note:** This year we have removed a word count limit for each section. Please engage in tables, bullet points, outlines, narrative and related images. Your audience includes members of the Restorative Practice Steering Committee: district representation, SPFT representation, community members/leaders, parent and family voice and students.

**Section 1: Your school the need, strengths**

1. Please provide us with a description of your school, the students, community and staff. You are welcome and invited to present this in as creative a modality as possible.

**Montessori and Restorative Practices**

Montessori and Restorative Practices have linked roots. Both grow out of respect for each child as being a gift full of opportunity and promise. Montessori and Restorative Practices both believe that if you honor children, give them a voice, and teach them how to use that voice, their true, peaceful, constructive, creative talents will be able to flow. Montessori does not believe in rewards or punishments, but natural consequences, and that one of these natural consequences is moving through conflict together.

When our students greet our staff each morning, it is overwhelmingly by our first names, which may or may not be preceded by a “Ms.” or “Mr.” This is not out of a sense of familiarity, lacking respect, or a lenient school climate, but rather comes out of a place of relationship. As a Montessori school, we place the humanity of our students alongside our own humanity as staff, without the need to reassert staff’s authority roles in the classroom. Knowing our students individually and intimately to create and maintain positive relationships is at the forefront of our belief system as a Montessori staff.

Our youngest four year old learners are trusted with tasks of responsibility, such as sweeping, table washing, and watering plants. As our students grow, they are trusted to guide and lead the younger
students. Our Montessori classrooms are reflective of a space where learning is done alongside and with students, sitting on the floor for a lesson with an individual child or a small group of multi-age students, instead of a type of education that is done to students. Rarely does content instruction occur in whole group lessons, but like Maria Montessori, we use group lessons for deep spirited growth and mindfulness activities that bring out the best in all children while making them aware of the needs and strengths of each other in order to build a better community.

Montessori and Restorative Practices are intertwined in the values they share. As staff have begun to explore, inquire, and engage in restorative practices, some teachers have had the affirmation that restorative practices “names” a way of being they have been inhabiting all along. Others have reflected on how naturally restorative practices integrates into a Montessori environment. Still others are at the wondering and curiosity stage, but overwhelmingly staff have embraced the authentic relationships at the center of both Montessori and Restorative Practices.

**Nokomis Montessori**

When our campus expanded to be a dual mirror campus program five years ago, we had the opportunity to update our logo and have a dialogue about the essence of our school community. Our logo has three roots at the bottom of the tree, representing the three levels of Montessori: Children’s House (pre-k and kindergarten), Elementary I (1st, 2nd, 3rd grade), and Elementary II (4th & 5th grade). It also has a peace dove in the tree, symbolic of the often repeated phrase that “*Nokomis is a peaceful place to learn.*” Commitment to peace is an inherent part of Montessori.

**Students**

As a magnet school, Nokomis Montessori serves the east side of St. Paul. While some families choose our school because it utilizes the Montessori approach, others choose it because of the reputation of our school in their families and communities. Our students bring massive amounts of “cultural capital” to school with them each day, with 47% of our students being multilingual learners, and representing many racial and cultural identities, including 56% Asian, 12% Black, 5% Latino, and 27% white. Additionally, 65% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch.

Our students learn from one another in multi-age classrooms, seeing their peers as learners and teachers. Our classes partner with one another and come together regularly for reading buddies, art projects, and partner teas. The Partner Tea is an example of older students leading and supporting younger students by helping to serve food, carry table conversation, and complete a small project in partnership.

**Community**

Our Hmong CLanD (Culture, Literacy, Art, and Dance) program invites and welcomes Hmong as well as students of other racial and cultural backgrounds to learn the Hmong language, art, dance, authentic Hmong food and customs. Our Hmong New Year celebration, attended by hundreds of families is a classic example of how we work at connecting with our community.
Nokomis Fun Fair is a service learning project planned and put on by our Elementary II students, families, and teachers to raise money for field trips and art residencies, and it is attended by current families as well as so many past students that we began an “alumni room” as part of the evening’s activities.

Relationships
There is a common thread of relationships woven within our school, students, families, and community. Relationships are the foundation of our work as a Montessori elementary school, making connections with our students both on an academic and non-academic level, outreach with our families and our community as partners for our students and their education, as well as between staff. As a Montessori school, our students have three teachers during their elementary career. This fosters a unique, consistent relationship between students, families, and their teachers. These relationships and connections encourage deeper conversations about growth and development, and enduring partnerships that benefit all.

But, like all dynamic learning environments, these relationships falter. They undergo transition, such as when our program expanded to two campuses, welcoming many, new staff. Relationships include conflict, which is a natural part of the complexity of learning in community. Children experience trauma, which cannot be separated from their daily learning experience. And if Montessori and Restorative Practices have linked roots, with the reoccurring priority placed on relationships, then naturally our focus as a staff as we approach Restorative Practices is to determine how it will create, nurture, and repair the relationships between students, staff, and families as we strive for a peaceful Nokomis learning environment.

2. Describe needs and strengths through:

   a. Data (Including ODR, ISS/OSS, attendance rates, MSS or 5E data on students experiences with school and safety etc., disaggregated, whenever possible)

Office Discipline Referrals
Terri Jackson, the new assistant principal, who was the Restorative Practice Coach at Riverview Elementary, meets with 100 percent of the students with ODRs. Restorative questions and processes are always used for students to listen, understand, reflect, and grow from. Every situation is an opportunity for learning and problem solving in the hopes of deepening each child’s repertoire of strategies to persevere through challenges of everyday life, foster more empathy, and truly understand and value others perspectives. In mid-December, we overheard two students who just finished a harm-repair small circle exclaim, “That was not scary at all! Ms. Terri just helps us solve problems!” This reaction from two students reinforced the purpose around using Restorative Practices with all of our ODRs. It takes ODRs to a place where students have the opportunity to reflect, grow, and make changes.
b. Anecdotes or stories that exemplify the needs you hope to address and/or strengths you plan to build on through whole school implementation of restorative practices.

Our program expanded five years ago due to a high demand from east side families for a Montessori learning environment and consistently long waiting lists. We expanded to dual mirror campuses, which required hiring ten new Montessori teachers from 2013 to 2016. Thus, we have many probationary staff. In addition, we opened six new Montessori classrooms and replaced four Montessori teachers.

One teacher, our experienced special education teacher who joined our community after 17 years in the district, speaks about the radical welcome present at Nokomis and how our community is a unique one. Instead of her previous role as the special education teacher in a pull-out model consisting of continually trying to track down teachers to offer her expertise and ideas for supporting her students, staff were seeking her out from the beginning, wanting to best meet the needs of our students, everyone’s students. Being the only special education teacher on a staff has
the potential to be isolating, as she experienced in other schools, but she has found that the Nokomis is a different type of community.

That being said, we have a continued need for the development of staff relationships and feel Restorative Practices is ideally suited to meet this need. At the same time, there is also a need for the opportunity for authentic relationships amongst staff to be created and supported. Multiple staff have shared that after attending a one or two day RP training last year, “That was the first time I have had the opportunity to hear the thoughts and perspectives of a co-worker I have been working with for years!” We began to think: If that is the type of transformation that could occur during one or two days in circles, imagine the transformation that could occur in a staff that invites Restorative Practices and engages in circles with intentionality.

We began to make small changes, such as facilitating some staff meetings sitting in circles and opening other staff meetings in circle. These changes were met with positive response from staff. But, in order for true transformation of staff culture and relationships to occur, we need dedicated time and the invitation to participate in the process. When asked during a staff meeting held in circle, focused on Restorative Practices, to include voices and inform this application, many, many staff communicated that their hope and dream would be to have RP training on-site, with all staff, to know more and build relationships with one another. Our staff as a whole is open and ready to engage. They see the linked roots between their initial experience with RP and their values and beliefs as a Montessori educator. Our teaching assistants observe and participate in circles being held in classrooms and witness the necessary power of relationships in their daily work with students. TAs were invited to attend introductory Restorative Practices training in December, and many readily accepted this invitation.

After staff training, we started holding circles regularly for students. This worked well as opening and closing circles, as well as community building circles. It has been more of a challenge with circles to repair harm. Our students have had some experience with circles to repair harm, and reflected on their overall effectiveness in repairing relationships and strengthening the class. At the same time, it has been a challenge when students ask for circles at a time when trained staff is not available, or not available promptly enough. We also need support and staffing that allows for effective pre-conferencing, and staff to be present during the circle, or to cover a classroom so that the involved teacher can be present in the circle. We have heavily placed the focus on year one on our staff, our relationships with one another, our belief systems and agreements, and common language across our school, focused around Restorative Practices.

3. What changes in school climate would most positively impact your school community? Please include narrative or example from the lens of educator, parent and families, leadership and student voice.

Staff, family, and student voices were invited as part of this application process and the exploration of next steps for the Nokomis Restorative Practices journey.
Family Voice
Themes that emerged throughout the family responses were the wish that students learn conflict resolution and communication skills that will serve students into adolescence and adulthood. For example, one parent shared, “Changes in school climate would be to use Restorative Practices to address smaller and larger issues. I think now more than ever, children need to be taught how to address when they feel wronged and have the opportunity to address the person or persons who have hurt them. But they also need to be taught forgiveness since we need to work and interact with the same people in our communities.” Another parent shared, “RP elevates students’ voices so that their concerns are respectfully addressed and they become an integral part of the problem solving process.”
Families consistently shared values that we as staff also hold in high regard, such as the importance of student voice being invited and heard in all of the spaces of our school. A parent of a very quiet, reserved student shared, “I think restorative practice is a great way for kids to learn to take turns speaking and listening. I believe it’ll strengthen kids vocally. Growing up as a kid I believed what I thought and felt didn’t matter because I was just a kid. So practicing restorative circles will allow students to feel like they have a voice and that what they have to say does matter. I’d like to see that students learn that listening is just as important as speaking.”

Student Voice
As educators at a rather beginning level of implementing restorative practices, we are continually reminded in our circle experiences of the power of each students’ presence, whether that presence is a space of listening and belonging or whether it is their voice being heard and honored in the circle. Our students share that in circle they feel heard, calm, empowered, respected, and proud.

Some of their favorite parts of circle are: “I feel like I can open up and share my feelings and thoughts to people I can trust.” “We get to hear honest thoughts,” and “Saying what you want to say and you know that people are listening.” These statements are from a classroom doing community circles as well as some circles to repair harm. Imagine the school climate that could exist when all classrooms are invited to engage in the Restorative Practices journey.

Staff Voice
One classroom educator shared, “I keep thinking of one my students’ faces when I think about this work. He is a child who has difficult home life and often explodes in anger. He is also bright eyed and excited to help and learn. He needs me to be skilled enough to help him manage his emotions and bring him back to learning. He needs me to be skilled enough to gently and kindly help him hear how his behavior affects his friends, so that he can slowly, without shame, learn new ways to handle his feelings as they ebb and flow. I believe that Restorative Practices training will help me build the skills to meet this boy and so many of our students’ needs.”

An E1 Classroom teacher shared with us: “I have my circle during my morning meetings and I have two students who are mostly nonverbal. During that time in circle, these two students use the talking piece and respond in one word. This has been very meaningful to me because it is showing me that they are expressing their feelings and feel comfortable enough to share with their classmates.”
**School Climate Changes**

A parent shared, "One of the reasons I like Nokomis is the sense of community and focus on social learning as well as cognitive learning. I feel Nokomis already does a fantastic job of cultivating a very positive, connected school community. I feel implementing Restorative Practices school wide would only further enhance the strong base that is already laid and provide a continuity for students."

Because of the multi-age nature of our classrooms, students are with each teacher for two or three years, having a total of three teachers from pre-k to 5th grade. Students visit their previous teachers, often daily, to check in or to volunteer in the classroom, and these relationships are continued far after the student leaves that classroom and even after they matriculate to another school.

Our Montessori environment inherently supports strong relationships, but we also know that relationships require time, intention, and at times, repair. We know our students experience trauma and as a school participating in professional development to become “trauma-informed,” we realize the importance of predictable, loving relationships for each of the students, but especially children who have or are experiencing trauma. In classrooms where teachers have created space, voice, and student ownership in the circle process, students now request the circle process to repair friendship relationships, to solve conflict, and to better understand one another’s perspectives.

Montessori philosophy has a tenet to “follow the child,” a value that informs our differentiated, instruction, and the way we honor the humanity and individuality of our students, but, the reality of our current staffing is that we cannot always “follow the child,” despite our best intentions. It is difficult to honor these student requests for circles in a timely manner, to dedicate the uninterrupted time to fully engage in the circle process, or to respond with supports to students’ trauma and difficult situations that are shared in circle. We need increased staff to build capacity in our building to respond to the needs of students experiencing trauma and to provide circles when students ask for opportunity to restore relationships.

School response to discipline has often been something done “to” students. Nokomis has had a steady shift towards a more restorative “with” approach. We’ve changed our “discipline referral” to contain relationship based interventions to behavior challenges, such as conferences with the student. With our licensed staff, we created “Check and Connect,” where teachers can suggest students who would benefit from a positive adult relationship and staff pair up with an individual student to provide positive interactions and check-ins, essentially a positive, proactive relationship as opposed to often the reactive interactions students may have. The natural, progressive next step to our mindset about discipline is restorative practices. It creates a powerful sense of belonging as well as a framework for navigating the often messy dynamics of learning and problem solving in community. Restorative Practices provides an alternative to a school behavioral approach that is exclusionary and disproportionately affects students of color to an approach that is inclusive and focuses on repairing harm, restoring relationships, and honoring the humanity of our students.

**Section 2: Capacity and Understanding of Restorative Practices**
4. Describe the capacity of the school site for a new school-wide initiative, including leadership, engagement of staff, students, parents and family, community and experiences with implementation, including:

   a. **Existing knowledge about and experience with implementation/adoption of new initiatives.**

**Social Emotional Support**

Here at Nokomis, we are committed to social-emotional support. Through school wide collaboration, over the past few years we implemented school-wide behavior expectations, the Zones of Regulation, and MeMoves. Numerous staff participated in Innocent Classroom training. Afterwards, staff reported viewing interactions with students differently, and implemented changes in communication in continuous attempts to see and hear our students. Over the past year our staff has been participating in trauma informed schools trainings as part of our staff meetings. We have participated in presentations that provide the basics of trauma responses in students, read and discussed articles, and have met in small groups to discuss how this learning affects our classrooms and students.

Our implementation of school-wide behavior expectations, the Zones of Regulation, and MeMoves align and set the foundation for Restorative Practices. These new initiatives are not stand alone tools. Our students need more staff to help support their behavior and social-emotional well being.

   b. **Existing teams, or lack thereof, that could take up RP implementation (e.g., PBIS, SCIT) and their accomplishments.**

Currently, our Leadership, Family Engagement, PBIS and NCAT (SCIT) teams are collaborating to champion, plan, and implement Professional Development and support our present levels of Restorative Practices. Over half of our team attended Multi-day RP training last summer and fall to continue to grow their own practice and support colleagues. These team members are intentional about collaboration and reflection on the successes and challenges within Restorative Practices with their immediate team members, as members of their various leadership teams, and across the building. As collaborative teams we have a variety of disciplines represented and multiple perspectives with which to analyze current and future practice through data and narrative.

   c. **Track records of engaging community parents, family and other stakeholders in school climate improvements.**

Here at Nokomis, we strive to find ways to connect our community and parents. Last year, in an effort to provide more opportunities for partnership, we started our Nokomis Climate Advisory Team (formerly the SCIT team). Families, community members, and staff meet monthly over pot luck to discuss pertinent issues to continue to build relationships, and strengthen climate. This year, we are holding our meetings in Circles. One parent recently shared, "I've grown in my
confident to share and speak by being in Circles. I've never been so involved in my child's education like I am now." Another parent shared, "I want to learn more about Restorative Practices so I can use it at home!" These anecdotal stories are examples of how we track the impact of Restorative Practices, along with gathering formal data to assess for outcomes of our collaborative climate progress.

d. The approval process you used in deciding to pursue this funding. Please include what survey or other process and invitation for adult, student voice and other perspectives were engaged.

Achieving high teacher and licensed staff buy-in was essential in moving forward in applying to become a Restorative Practice Pilot site. This process began by having eight educators and both administrators attend a SCIT training in November of 2016. This group then created a SCIT team, including Nokomis parents. To form the SCIT team, staff made an effort to involve community members who would represent the racial and socioeconomic diversity of our school. After exploring the idea of Restorative Practices with an introductory training for three staff, and an all-staff visit from the SPPS Restorative Practices Coordinator, the SCIT team then conducted a survey of all Nokomis North licensed staff to provide feedback on moving forward with the Restorative Practices Practice Pilot Site Application. We had a 100% yes response for a Restorative Practices Application.

Our desire to infuse Restorative Practices with our Montessori philosophy only deepened after not having the opportunity to become a pilot site last year. Over half of our staff took multi-day Restorative Practices trainings in the summer of 2017, and others attended the MDE RP summer institute. We were able to add Theresa Jackson, a Restorative Practices coordinator from Riverview, as our new assistant principal. Terri has strengthened our use of Restorative Practices, using Circles for staff meetings, ODRs, parent conferences, and classroom circles. Terri leads by example, creating partnerships between classrooms, families and the community. Her guidance has been extremely valuable as we continue to implement and grow with our Restorative Practices.

5. What is the current knowledge and opinion about RP in the school, among staff, admin, students, family and community? How do you know what they know or feel? Describe any introductory professional development in restorative practices your building has engaged in, strategic steps you have already taken to create a restorative culture (including among adults) or existing pockets or restorative programming and how they have been received. For example, if your school has previously applied to become an RP site, what has been implemented, what has been learned and how is this application a reflection of those shifts?

- A sample survey has been provided in the Schoology course.
Our staff and administration are eager to continue down the path we have started towards being a building with a fully restorative culture. Our licensed staff survey returned a 100% “yes” rate for applying to be a Restorative Practices pilot site. Our administration is eager and on board. Last spring and summer, staff participated in circle trainings. This has resulted in all 28 licensed staff participating in at least one RP training so far. Our administration participates in community and staff circles, and work to dedicate funds to make Restorative Practice professional development accessible to all staff.

**Section 3: Strategy and planned activities**

6. Describe your overall strategy to ensure that implementing restorative practices will positively impact your school’s overall climate through the following prompts:

   a. **What is the primary purpose of implementing restorative practices at your school?**

   We at Nokomis agree with the “underlying premise of restorative practices,” which “is that people are happier, more cooperative, more productive and more likely to make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things WITH them rather than TO them or FOR them” (The Restorative Practice Handbook, Costello and Wachtel).

   The primary purpose of implementing restorative practices is to deepen our practice of circle keeping and relationship building and repairing at Nokomis North, as it aligns beautifully with Montessori beliefs and philosophy. We are deeply committed in honoring each child as a valued member of our community. This alignment has allowed for an easy early implementation in our Montessori classrooms. We see how restorative practices is a natural way of being, helping deepen relationships by understanding multiple perspectives, resulting in a more compassionate, caring and cohesive community. As a school, we all work diligently at creating a trusting environment, where are our staff, students, and families have a safe space to speak, be heard, share, and learn.

   b. **What resources and experiences guided your school’s design of an implementation plan? What about your school supports a unique and innovative approach to restorative practices implementation?**

   There are many resources and individuals guiding our schools design of implementation. Over the last year and a half, staff have continued to see our Restorative Practices professional development expanding, leading to new ideas and implementation. Examples include:

   - Staff leadership within our building.
   - Various Circle Trainings.
   - Positive stories from students and staff experiences.
   - School visits to Restorative Practice Pilot site.
We are fortunate at Nokomis to have Terri Jackson’s experience and leadership with Restorative Practices. Recognizing her knowledge gives us tools and guidance to make our process natural, but at the same time we recognize that the process needs to be organic to our own school environment and that what works for one community may not work for us at Nokomis. With that said, we want to embrace a growth mindset in terms of preconceived goals within our timelines. As we continue to evolve in our story, we are reminded of our commitment to keeping our students at the center of our vision. Our RP smart goals and outcomes serves as guides for us to lead the work, and we are committed to continuous progress monitoring to meet the needs of our students, staff, and the extended Nokomis families.

c. Who will lead implementation? What leadership model will be used and why?

When we think about our Restorative Practice Team at Nokomis North, it is essential that we recognize that all members of our community are part of the Restorative Practice Team. When it comes to training and implementing Restorative Practices, all staff are part of the process.

The Restorative Practice Coordinator, in collaboration our administration, along with our leadership team, will lead implementation. Additionally, all Nokomis staff, students, and families will be involved in the implementation of Restorative Practices.

Our vision is to have a Restorative Practices responding team that consists of two SCSP leads and three floating TAs to support our students as needed in addition to their classroom teachers. The responding team are the staff members who will be available throughout the day to support students and teachers. Our two SCSP leads would work closely with our administration to plan and provide professional development, lead staff, classroom circles, and guide the Restorative Practices TAs in the building. The TAs would travel within a designated level (CH, E1, E2) and foster community building as a proactive resource as well as a repairing harm resource. Having a consistent TA within each level will reinforce relationships and behaviors amongst students and our Restorative Practice Team. We want students to have the opportunity to thrive in an environment that is calm and safe, where students are heard, and where they know what steps are taken to maintain meaningful relationships.

In addition to staff leadership, we want to build student leadership. Restorative practices is not just something we want our students to use while at Nokomis. We are building capacity. We are teaching life long skills of listening, empathy, respecting differences and multiple points of view. We want this to be carried on with our students when they leave for sixth grade. Having E2 fifth graders lead circles in Children’s House, E1, and E2 is an opportunity for them to build on their skills, gain confidence, build relationships, and help our community grow and strengthen. In addition, we want incorporate student voice and choice during our circles to give students an opportunity to lead a circle or share a concern.
Our pathway school is Parkway Montessori, a current Restorative Practice pilot site. As a pilot site, we would lay the foundation for the students to transition successfully to middle school equipped with the RP tools and skills gained from Nokomis.

7. What specific action steps or activities will you and your school take?

a. Provide a summary of what activities will happen throughout the three years of the pilot, so that, by the end of three years, you will have a sustainable and effective restorative practice program throughout the school.

Year one
- Continued Restorative Practice training to staff, students, families and community stakeholders through regular communication such as newsletters, NCAT meetings, and our school website.
- Professional development for all staff (licensed and non-licensed) in principles, practices and procedures of Restorative Practices.
- Modeling of Restorative Circles.
- Daily use of Circle to welcome and repair at the classroom and for specific events.

Year Two
- Continue everything from year one.
- Continual sharing of information to all stakeholders through regular communication.
- Professional development aligned with needs assessment.
- MDE training continues for RP Coordinator and Team.
- Regular Circle opportunities for families and communities.
- Refresher training for continuing staff plus foundational training for new staff members.
- Classroom instruction, modeling and daily use of Restorative Circles.

Year Three
- Continue everything from year one and year two.
- Community partnerships.
- Parent trainings.
- Student led Circles.

b. Provide a detailed scope of work for Year 1, including summer months and PD days, detailing how you will embed professional development and build staff capacity. What plan for PLCs and ongoing coaching do you have? What is your communications plan? Will you do a policy review or other building level work? How will you engage an Election to Work Agreement to support all educators in professional development and implementation engagement?
Our primary focus of year one is the frequency of implementation, with our secondary focus being the outcome measures in regards to effectiveness. Anecdotal data will be kept through ongoing PD, staff meetings, reflective team meetings, and monthly NCAT gatherings.

**Spring 2018**
- Both a survey and one on one interviews with representatives from each stakeholder group will occur to reflect on year one and provide feedback for the upcoming year.
- Staff will receive Training from MN DoE and spend 2 days planning for a detailed roll out during the summer.
  - Professional development will be provided for all building staff (including custodial, office and cafeteria staff) during or prior to opening week.
  - We will host Community Family Circle where parents can learn about restorative practice from being in a Circle.
  - We will partner with community experts to co-keep circles with staff, focused student groups, and at our family listening sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer 2018</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDE Training - Restorative Practice End of June 2018</td>
<td>Staff will be given the opportunity to attend the MDE Training at the end of June. We will survey staff who attend through Google Forms to gather post training feedback. We will also engage in a Circle to reflect on what we learned and make action plans for the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIRP Conferences</td>
<td>In August, some staff will attend the International Institute of Restorative Practice conference, which is being held in St. Paul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Day Restorative Practice Retreat</td>
<td>Before returning in August, we will be having a two-day retreat for all staff at Nokomis Montessori- North.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall, Winter, Spring</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circles for SAT, child study, leadership, staff, conferences</td>
<td>These meetings will conducted in Circles. This will be slowly implemented, with the goal of all meetings being held in Circles by Spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing Professional Development</td>
<td>Ongoing professional development opportunities will occur for all staff embedded in staff/team meetings, and non-student contact days for paraprofessionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Members</td>
<td>Invite community Circle leaders who reflect the population of our students and families. Newsletters will include information about the progress of circle in each individual classroom in order to introduce and include families in the process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Beyond funding for a Restorative Practice specific leadership position, how will the building staff actively support the implementation process? What specific and additional collaborative and supportive spaces will lead Restorative Practices in partnership with the RP leadership?

Our Nokomis team is committed, and will actively contribute to and participate in the implementation process in a variety of ways. In June of 2017, we hired a new assistant principal, Terri Jackson. She was previously a Restorative Practice coordinator, and is very passionate about this process. Terri uses the Restorative Practices process with every single ODR case, using effective dialogue and harm repairing Circles. Our staff meetings increasingly start or close in Circles, as well as all of the Nokomis Climate Advisory Team meetings.

Our leadership team aligns everything to the SCIP. Restorative Practices was added into the SCIP, a living document guiding what we do. In the past year, we went from having 6 licensed staff trained to all 28 licensed staff members taking some kind of Restorative Practices professional development. Upon our site visits pilot sites, our teachers immediately wrote grants and successfully received sensory and calming materials from donors choose.

Looking ahead, we have 100% staff buy in to continue our Restorative Practice journey. We are actively deepening and strengthening our Restorative Practices, embedding this into day to day life at Nokomis. When discussing again applying for the Restorative Practice Pilot Site Grant, staff took the initiative to make their voice heard, advocating for their colleagues, students and families. We all agreed that we are partners in this process, and moving forward, we are ready to support Restorative Practices through leadership, collaboration, and continued learning.

d. How will multiple stakeholders be engaged? Please specifically describe how you will include parents, community perspectives and youth voice. What outreach have you made to potential trainers, circle keepers and guides for this work?

All stakeholders connected to the Nokomis community will be engaged in the process of implementing Restorative Practices in the coming years. All Nokomis staff will be trained more in depth about Restorative Practices. Our staff will lead and model the practices and language for students and families. Restorative Practices will be embedded in our daily rituals and routines for students and staff. Families will have opportunities to engage in Circles and learn about RP through their children. Our NCAT, Nokomis Climate Advisory Team, which consists of parents, community members, and staff, meets monthly in Circles to discuss pertinent issues that impact the climate and
culture of our school community. NCAT will be an integral collaborative partner in providing RP trainings for our families. We would also like to reach out to the community to partner with Circle keepers who reflect the population of our students and serve as a role model for our community.

**Section 4: Evaluation**

8. Collecting accurate data is an important part of this pilot initiative. Please specifically describe your school’s strengths and opportunities for growth as relates to:

   a. **Consistently and accurately collecting ODR data.**

As a strength, Nokomis Montessori is grounded in collecting and analyzing the data, to allow for best practices in meeting the needs of all students. We are a highly reflective staff; we constantly engage in reflecting on what has been successful, as well as how we can improve. Currently, our Campus, as well as SWIS, only track negative behavior data. We will need to create an alternative, school-based data-collection tool to track our positive response data which aligns with restorative practices.

Nokomis is welcoming to all who enter. That feeling shows in the way we greet each other as staff, our students and families, and guests and visitors. It sounds like students and staff expressing their hopes, dreams, fears, and challenges openly in Circle during the school day, and later in the day it will sound like parents, staff, and community members sharing their experiences together in Nokomis Climate Advisory Team gatherings. It sounds like children being children — which can include laughter, speaking, singing, and sometimes tears - and those children being heard. As a Restorative school, Nokomis looks like students and teachers working together in small groups, openly sharing thoughts and ideas. This sharing is more open and honest because of the depth of relationships built in circle.

b. **Collecting and using school climate data.**

We value daily reflections to acknowledge what we are doing well and what we need to work on at Nokomis. Our leadership team has invested in the continuous school improvement process. We are open to feedback and evaluating where we are at and where we need to be. An area of growth for us is collecting data, both quantitative and qualitative, focused on the use of trauma informed approaches to support students in crisis. Our current data from SWIS reveals our students who have experienced trauma receive the most ODRs. Restorative Practices will help build trust and community, especially for our students who do not have the foundational skills to form healthy relationships due to the trauma they have experienced. Community Building Circles will help all students to foster more empathy as they gain more understanding about other’s perspectives and
9. Describe your proposed evaluation plan.

a. What indicators/benchmarks do you expect to see in year 1? How will you collect the data? Consider both narrative and quantitative data?

Our primary goal in year one is to come together to embrace restorative practices as our way of being. We want to honor that this is a process rather than a simplistic solution. One indicator of our success will be an end of year survey taken from ALL staff to get feedback on both their knowledge, beliefs and current use of restorative practice. Our monthly NCAT team meetings will also be a crucial platform for us to gather feedback from families. In addition to a survey, we will conduct interviews with stakeholders to assess their current perspective on our school needs and determine if any modifications or adaptations need to be made to our current plan for years two and three. We will interview at least two individuals from each stakeholder group: students, families, community partners, administration, classroom teachers, licensed support staff, and paraprofessionals.

b. What outcomes do you expect to see by the end of Year 3? How will you collect the data? Consider both narrative and quantitative data?

Our hopes and dreams at Nokomis Montessori by the end of Year 3 is to have sustainable restorative practice strategies in place and embedded in our school community. We will collect data throughout the process and monitor and adjust as needed to ensure that we are implementing restorative practice strategies with fidelity. We are hoping by year 3 of implementation, we will see an increase in outcomes, both in quantitative data, such as increased academic growth and decreased ODRs as well as qualitative, such as increased social-emotional health and stronger relationships among staff and students. The Nokomis Leadership Team and Nokomis Climate Advisory Team will be monitoring our work and paving the necessary path for us to live our mission and reach our vision. Academic data, behavioral data, and surveys (students, staff, and community) will be the prime sources of data. Using the data cycle process, we will establish SMART goals to ensure that the restorative practices are being implemented and positively impacting our students’ learning and the overall climate of Nokomis. Our SMART goals will be visible to our staff, our students, and to our community.

Section 5: Budget & Budget Justification

10. Provide a detailed budget and describe how your budget will help you implement restorative practices and achieve your goals. How will you use the funds so that all the adults in the school learn restorative practices and use them? Expectations: Schools are welcome to allocate 5-10% of total budget request for evaluation, especially if that is an area for growth. School sites must allocate a percentage of their budget dollars for professional
development for all staff. Please also describe whether additional building budget dollars will support implementation of RP.

The following is a graph outlining our budget. We have allocated the largest amount of money to our two leads. After visiting Maxfield Elementary, we are motivated to create our own version of the "Green Room" - The Nest. We were inspired by our close community and logo, to make a safe landing spot for our students in need of extra support. We have also allocated money to professional development, training materials, and evaluation. Money unused by our outlined budget will be put towards additional professional development and sensory items for classrooms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restorative Practice Leads (two 1.0 SCSPs)</td>
<td>$100,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipends for Teachers (summer and after school training)</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>$7,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP Training Materials</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Room - The Nest</td>
<td>$7,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>$1000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$150,000.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 6: Summary**

11. Why should your school be selected as restorative practices pilot site? You are encouraged to innovate your presentation and to actively include multiple voices and perspectives.

We are ready. Our staff, students, and community are ready! Listen to the voices conveyed on our [Nokomis Montessori North Video](#).

We hope that through reading our application and watching our video you have a understanding of where Nokomis Montessori North has come from, where we are currently, and our vision for the future with Restorative Practices. Our belief is that children all have an intrinsic desire for deep
connection, and for meaning and purpose. We know that adults share this: staff, family, and community members are striving for the same relationships and relevance each day.

Thank you for considering Nokomis Montessori North as a restorative practices pilot site.