



Fairfax County
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE

**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
IN
FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**



Fairfax County
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE

www.fcps.edu

Stefan Mascoll
Coordinator, Student Safety and Wellness Office
smascoll@fcps.edu

Vickie Shoap
Restorative Justice Specialist II
vrshoap@fcps.edu
571-423-4278

Presentation Objectives

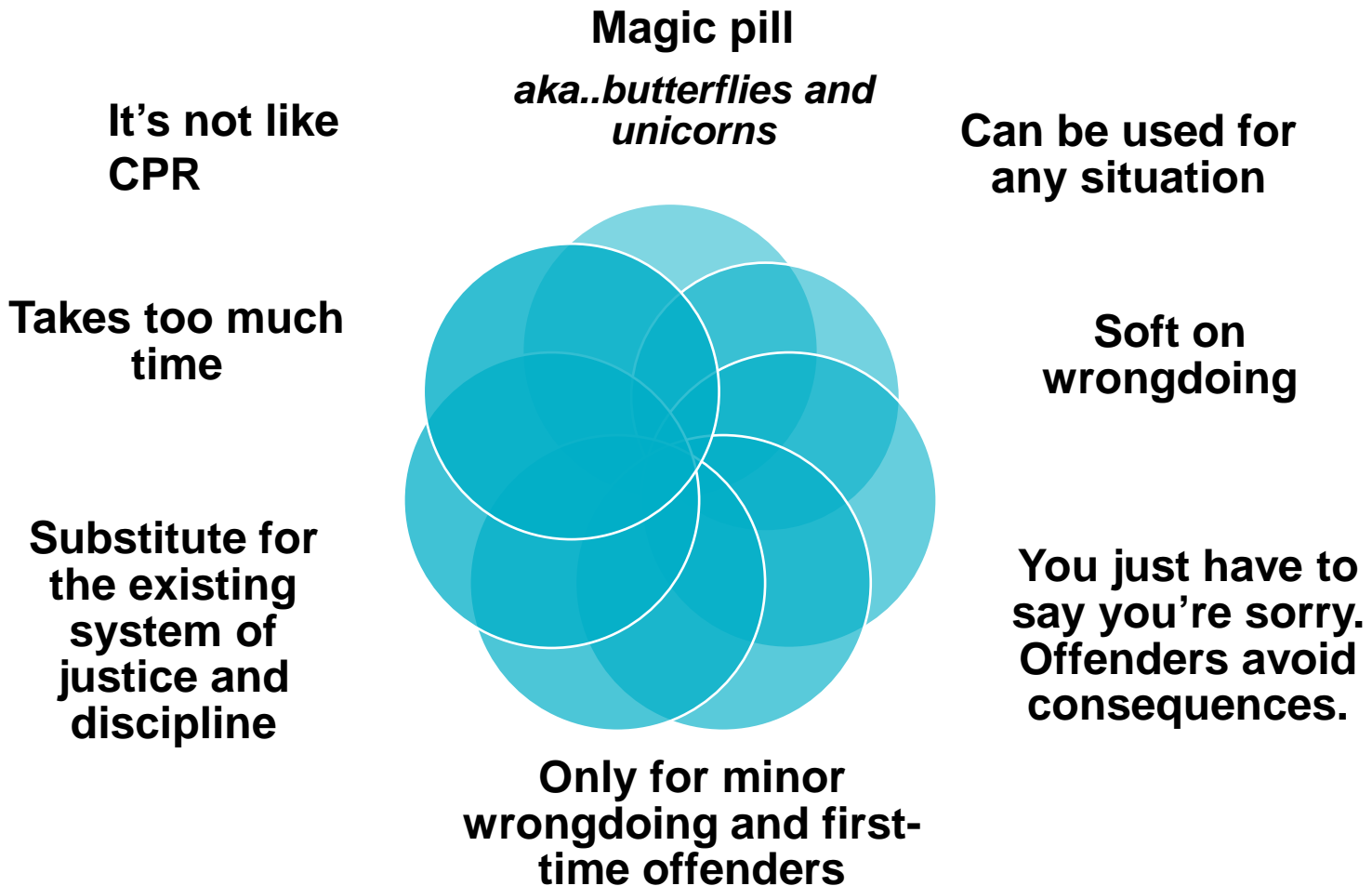
Discuss discipline options that reflect a shift from traditional to restorative responses

Overview of the restorative justice implementation in FCPS

Present information on reducing the number of juveniles entering the justice system through school discipline

Discuss successes and challenges of RJ implementation

Myths of Restorative Justice Practice



Restorative Justice is... a *philosophy* based on a set of principles for responding to harm and wrongdoing



Communicator

- Deep listening, reflection and personal communication skills are modeled and taught through direct engagement.



Goal-Directed
and Resilient
Individual

- The basic premise of RJ is that strong relationships with adults and other students are fundamental to learning and resilience.



Collaborator

- An RJ process is a collaborative process that seeks to involve and engage people in decisions that affect their lives.



Ethical and
Global Citizen

- The circle process teaches social-emotional skills such as empathy, compassion and cultural awareness.



Creative and
Critical Thinker

- RJ is primarily a structured and reflective problem-solving process.

Principles of Restorative Justice on which all applications in FCPS are based

Focus on the harms of wrongdoing more than on the rule or law that has been broken.

Empower victims and show equal concern for their needs in the discipline process.

Support students who have harmed others while encouraging them to take personal responsibility for their actions and understand, accept and carry out their obligations.

Principles of Restorative Justice (cont.)

Provide opportunities for dialogue between students who have harmed others and those most affected by the wrongdoing. ***Participation is always voluntary.***

Involve and empower the affected community through the process of justice.

Encourage collaboration and reintegration, rather than punishment and isolation.

Show respect to all parties involved in wrongdoing and involve all equally.

Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice

Restorative practices are skills often utilized in formal restorative justice processes that may also be used in classrooms to build relationships, create connections and prevent harm and violence before they occur.

Restorative justice is a formal victim-centered process for responding to harm and wrongdoing.

Restorative Discipline Paradigm Comparison

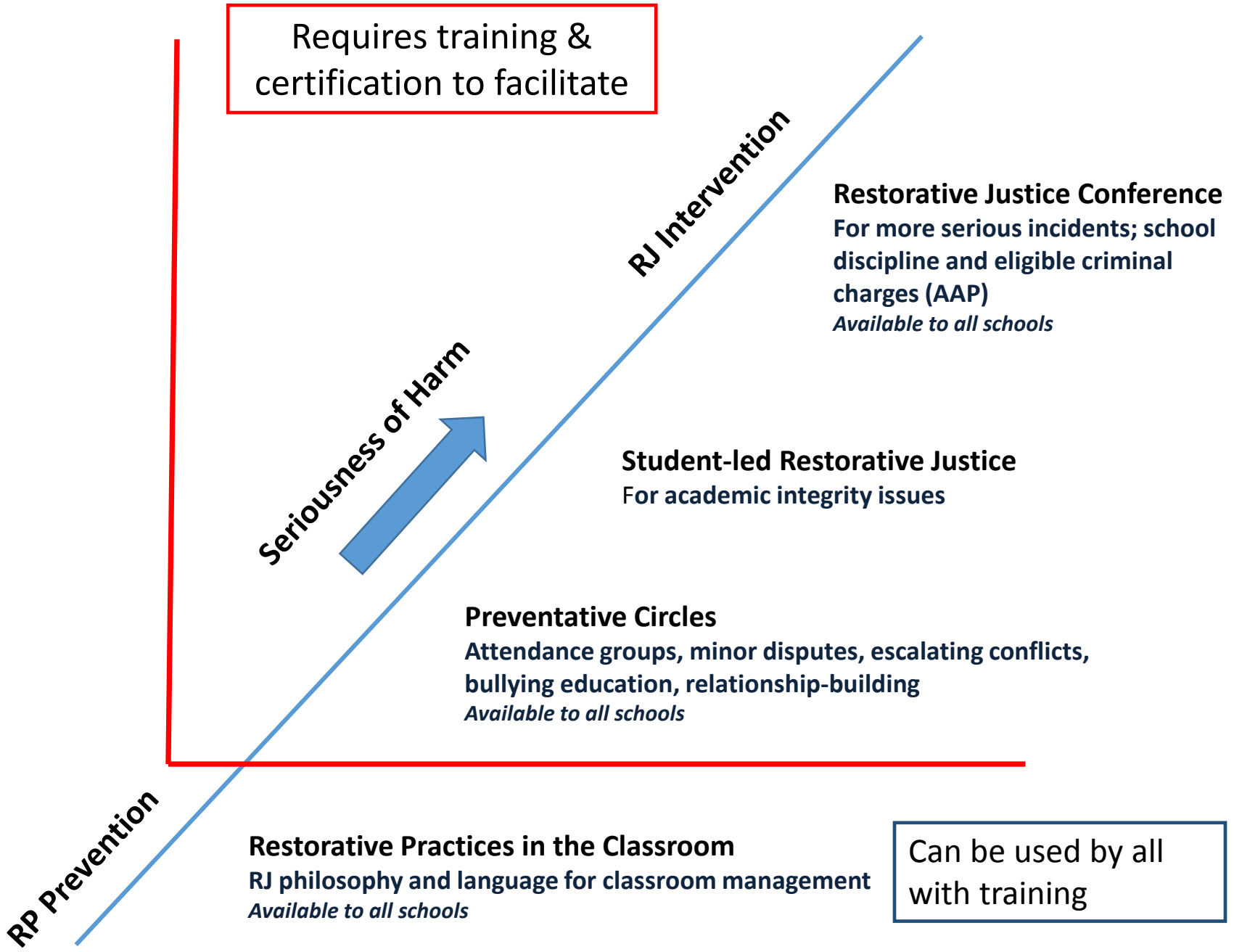
Traditional

- Offensive behavior means breaking the rules.
- Administrators determine outcome
- Focus is on offending student
- Can produce defensiveness
- Accountability means 'taking your medicine'

Restorative

- Offensive behavior means violating people and relationships
- Everyone impacted by incident determines outcome
- Focus is on those impacted
- Encourages honesty
- Accountability means taking personal responsibility for actions

Continuum of restorative practices (RP) and restorative justice (RJ) applications in FCPS



Requires training & certification to facilitate

Restorative Justice Conference
For more serious incidents; school discipline and eligible criminal charges (AAP)
Available to all schools

Student-led Restorative Justice
For academic integrity issues

Preventative Circles
Attendance groups, minor disputes, escalating conflicts, bullying education, relationship-building
Available to all schools

Restorative Practices in the Classroom
RJ philosophy and language for classroom management
Available to all schools

Can be used by all with training

School Suspension Facts

(US Dept. of Education, US Dept. of Justice 2012)

In the past two decades school discipline policies like 'zero tolerance' have significantly increased the incarceration rates of youth in the US.

Repeat suspensions in middle school *triple* the probability of later involvement with the *justice system*.

One suspension reduces a students trajectory toward graduation by *20%*.

School Discipline Data

94% of youth who participated in an RJ conference did not have a second violation of the SR&R (FCPS discipline code) within one year.

- 1086 offenders participated in Restorative Justice circles for discipline response**
- 65 offenders (6%) reoffended within similar SIS categories within the first year**
- 48% of reoffending students were special education students**

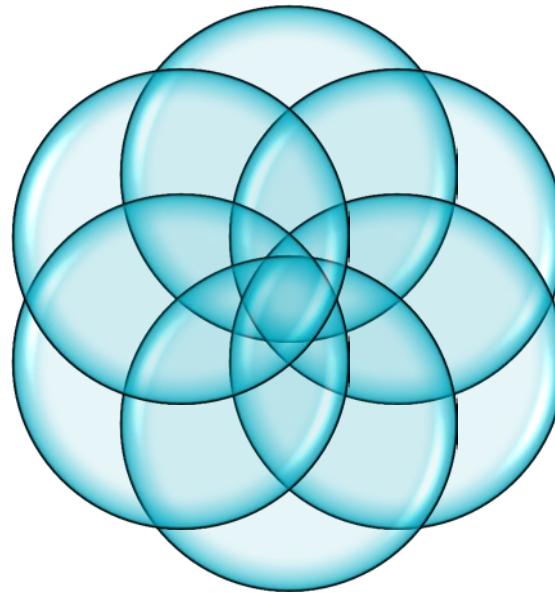
Collateral Consequences of Early Court Involvement

Juvenile arrest records do not “go away” at age 18

Families can be evicted from public housing if a child has a criminal charge pending

Court hearings and all records are public for felonies if the offender is age 14 or older

Most job applications require reporting any juvenile criminal CHARGES



Students may be placed in alternative education if convicted of a felony, regardless of their academic achievement

College applications require reporting of any juvenile delinquency CHARGES

Alternative Accountability Program- AAP

The mission is to reduce the number of juvenile arrests in Fairfax County and Fairfax City Public Schools and community.

SROs and Patrol Officers refer cases to the AAP for Restorative Justice as an alternative to filing a criminal complaint against a juvenile.

Participating Agencies:

- FCPS (referrals are facilitated by the FCPS RJ team)
- Fairfax County Police , Fairfax City Police
- Fairfax County Juvenile Court
- Fairfax County Government-Neighborhood and Community Services
- NVMS-Northern Virginia Mediation Services

Alternative Accountability Program (AAP) SRO/Police Diversion

98% of youth who participated in an RJ conference did not have a second criminal violation within one year.

- 189 offenders were diverted to Restorative Justice by SROs and FCPS Police from July 2014-December 2016. Over 80% were referred by SRO's.**
- 4 offenders (2%) reoffended within the first year.**

Implementation Strategies:

A basic premise of restorative practices is that people are happier and more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things *with* them rather than *to* or *for* them.

Implementation Strategies:

- **Work with schools and administrators that are open to a restorative philosophy.**
- **Training should be voluntary, training staff does not ensure buy-in.**
- **Hire or recruit RJ *trained and experienced* staff member (s) to lead implementation.**
- **Start small to go big. Start pilot projects at select schools.**
- **Create district policy to ensure support and fidelity of practice.**

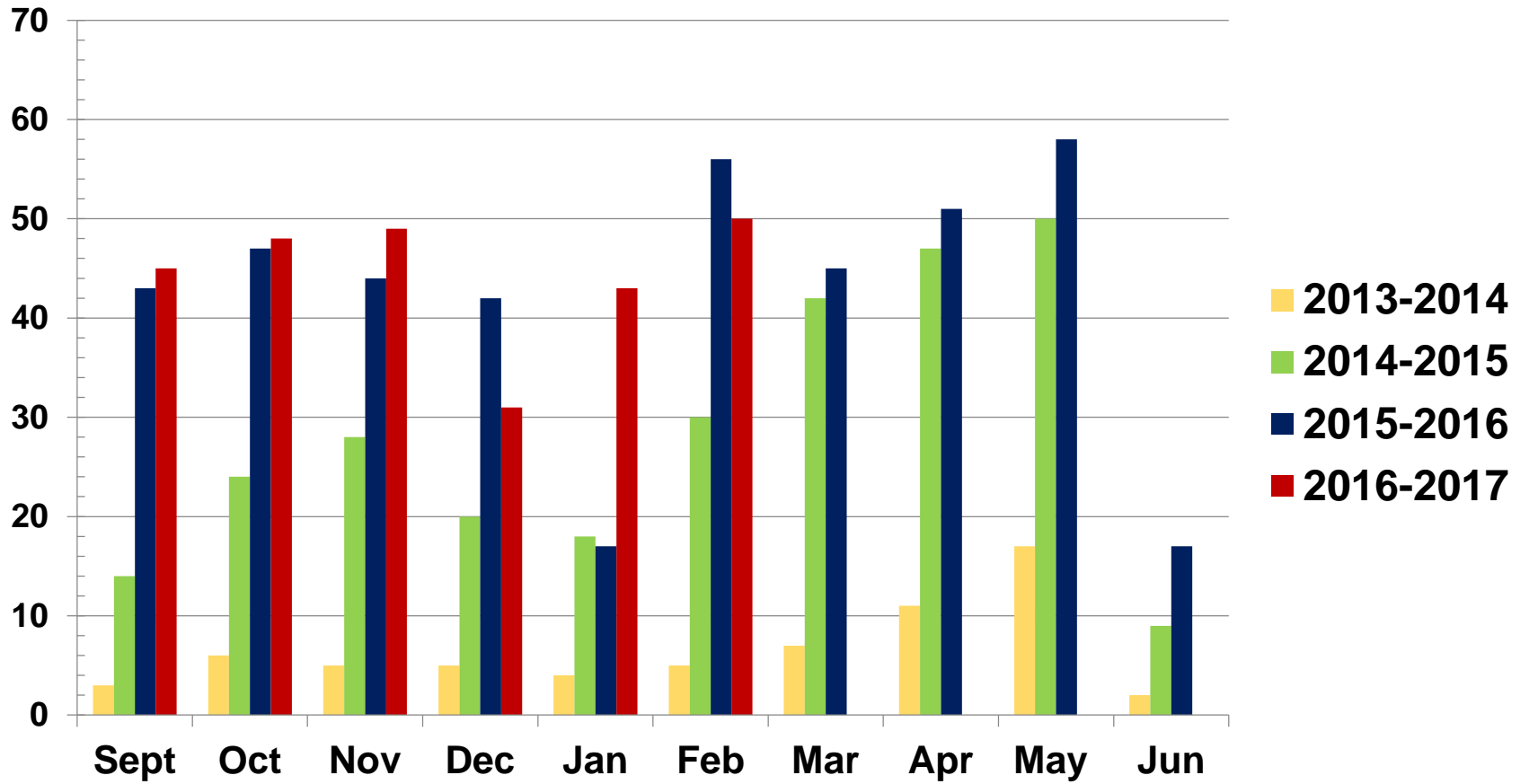
Implementation Challenges:

- **Shift in mindset and discipline strategies.**
- **Dispelling the myths of RJ practice.**
- **Funding, adding to work load of busy people.**
- **Gaining the trust of students.**
- **Staff buy-in, teacher resistance (one circle at a time).**
- **Parent and community buy-in.**
- **Fidelity of practice, discouraging punitive measures.**

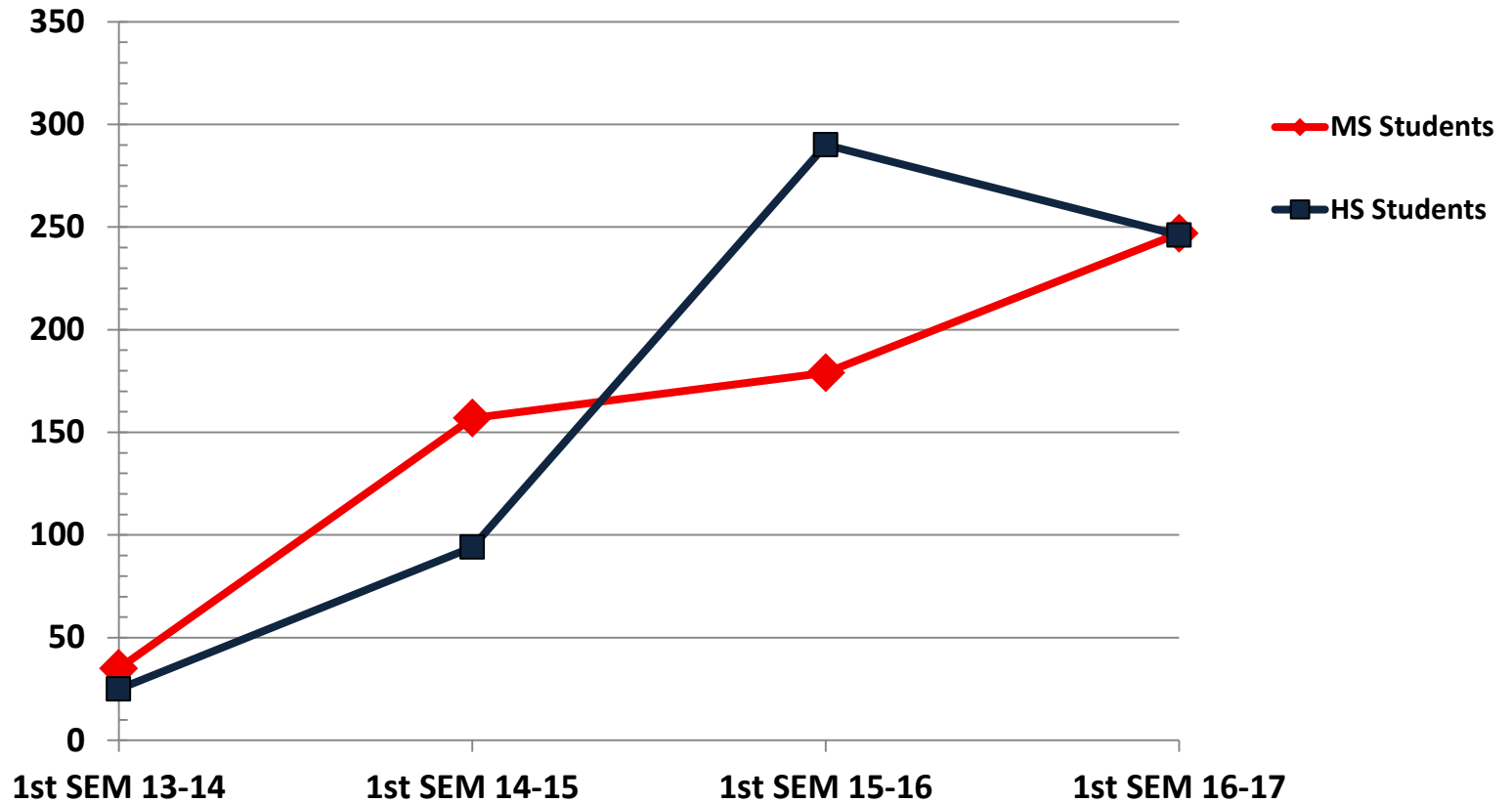
Outcomes:

- **Increased social emotional learning K-12.**
- **Conflict resolution education.**
- **Teaches empathy and personal accountability.**
- **Support for students harmed by wrongdoing.**
- **Low recidivism, reduced repeat suspensions.**
- **Parent involvement in discipline=**
- ✓ ***increased student academic success.***
- ✓ ***administration gains parent respect and support as collaborative partner.***

Growth in Number of RJ Referrals



Growth in Number of Students Served by RJ



Restorative Justice Student Demographics August 2014 to June 2016

