

Positive Ripple Effect of Restorative School Policy



SoPo Unite
South Portland, Maine

Explain

Explain the process for changing the school substance use policy from punitive to restorative

Share

Share the ripple effect of the policy change

Consider

Consider how you can build capacity in your own communities to catalyze this kind of policy change

Goals of the Session

Why Change the School Substance Use Policy

Suspension doesn't work

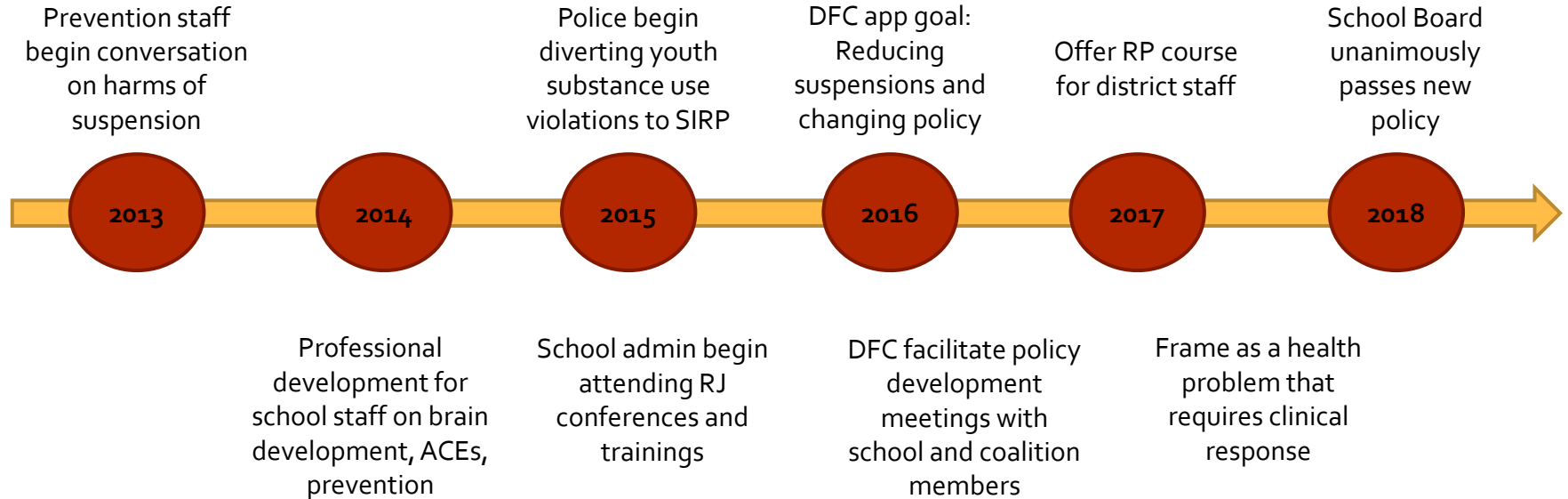
- Doesn't change behavior
- Shown to increase substance use among students

Reinforces problem as a moral failing instead of a clinical issue

Increases stigma and shame

Reduces protective factors

Building capacity to make policy change



South Portland School District Policy

Introduction:The Board recognizes that substance use disorders are preceded by early use and misuse of substances and that adverse childhood experiences and behavioral health disorders put a young person at greater risk for substance use.

Therefore, the Board believes coordinated prevention efforts should be implemented and system wide procedures established to deal with substance use in the South Portland Schools and students found using and in possession will be assessed by a behavioral health professional and evidenced-based intervention strategies will be recommended depending on the needs of the student. ...

... The policy provides for intervention when use is detected, provides support as appropriate and seeks to determine the best way for students to repair the harm they may have caused by their use.

<https://www.spsd.org/board/policy-book>

Procedures:

1. Police Involvement & Wellness Check

2. Assessment

Students are given a private behavioral health assessment by a social worker

3. Response Plan Meeting

School Administration and the social worker meet with the parent/guardian and the student to determine what the appropriate response should be.

4. Completing the Response Plan

Response plan based on Assessment. Menu of options includes:

- Meetings with the social worker
- Completion of a SIRP course
- Nicotine Intervention
- Supported In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Restorative Reflection
- Community Service
- Academic Support

5. A Restorative Reentry Meeting

South Portland High School Policy Violation Process

Student Name:

Date of Violation

Lead Assistant Principal:



Police Involvement
If there is a substance or paraphernalia, SRO notified

Wellness Check
Nurse and/or social worker check on the wellness of the student

Parents Notified
Parent or guardian picks up the student

Notes:



Assessment
Assessment of the student's behavioral health completed by social worker

Meeting
During a meeting with student, parents, social worker, & AP, plan is created for student to be held accountable for their actions and supported to return to class

Contact RJJM
Contact Restorative Justice Institute of Maine to discuss possible facilitation of restorative response

Notes:



Response Plan Completed
Student completes all elements of the response plan



Restorative Re-entry Meeting
Meeting with student, parents, social worker, AP, and RJ specialist to repair harm and support student to not do the behavior again

Notes:

SPHS Substance Use Policy Violation: Parent/Guardian Information

The purpose of the school substance use policy is to create a safe, substance free learning environment for all students and to help students abstain from using alcohol, nicotine and other drugs. By violating the policy, students put themselves and other students at risk. The process outlined in the school policy for violations gives students the opportunity to reflect upon their actions, consider what caused them to make the decision they made, repair any harm those actions may have caused while also providing them with the additional help and support they may need to not use substances at school or school sponsored events in the future. The response plan will include:

Step #1 Police Involvement & Wellness Check

When students are caught with a violating substance and/or paraphernalia, the School Resource Officer (SRO) is called upon to confiscate the items and summons students if applicable. The nurse is also asked to complete a "Wellness Check" on students to ensure there is no need for more medical treatment.

Step #2 Assessment:

Students are given a private behavioral health assessment by the school social worker or Day One social worker.

Step #3 Response Plan Meeting:

School Administration and the social worker meet with the parent/guardian and the student to determine what the appropriate response to the substance use violation should be based on the assessment of behavioral health needs, history of discipline problems, attitude and responsibility for their actions, and academic needs.

Step #4 Completing the Response Plan:

Students are given a specific time period (around 3-5 days) to complete the response plan. Actions the students might have to take in order to complete the response plan include:

- Meetings with the social worker
- Completion of a SIRP course (Student Intervention and Reintegration Program)
SIRP is a 12 hour education program for youth experimenting with alcohol or drugs. The program empowers youth to make healthy decisions and reduce risk.
- Nicotine Intervention
This is a one hour intervention that the student completes with a social worker or other trained staff member to educate the student on nicotine and empower them to make healthy decisions and reduce risk.
- Supported In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Restorative Reflection
- Community Service
- Academic Support

Step #5: A Restorative Reentry Meeting

Once the student has completed the response plan, the student, parents/guardians, social worker, school staff, and an advisor or teacher are invited to attend a restorative reentry meeting. With parent/guardian permission, SPHS may invite the Restorative Justice Institute of Maine to facilitate the reentry meeting.

Flow chart &
parent form

Policy change infographic

Student Substance Use Policy Change 2018

To ensure a safe, positive learning environment for all students, South Portland School District is taking a common sense approach to dealing with substance use at school or during school sponsored events.

The new policy brings our district into compliance with the Maine statutes for Duties of School Boards, which recommends a focus on positive and restorative interventions to school discipline rather than punishments and “zero-tolerance” practices such as automatic out-of-school suspensions.¹

The new policy will hold students accountable for their behavior, while working to address the underlying causes of their substance use.

What wasn't working with the old policy?

Students were sent home for 6 or 7 days.

During that time, students:

- missed school, causing many to fall behind academically
- were often unsupervised, leaving more opportunity for substance use
- underlying causes of substance use were not always addressed
- did not have to repair the harm they caused

These policy outcomes have been shown in the research to lead to higher rates of dropping out of school and high rates of substance use. Schools with similar policies had staff that were less likely to enforce the policy because it was seen as too harsh and there was more substance use among all students.²

¹Maine Statute for Duties of School Boards section 15-A, <http://legislature.maine.gov/legis/statutes/20-A/title20-Asec1001.html>

²Tracy Evans-Whipp, et. al., Longitudinal Effects of School Drug Policies on Student Marijuana Use in Washington State and Victoria, Australia, American Journal of Public Health, May 2015.



What happens to students who get caught using substances under the new policy?

They are given a behavioral health assessment. Student, administrator, social worker, and parents meet to discuss the incident and create a *response plan*.



All drugs and paraphernalia are still turned over to the police.



Students stay in school and complete their response plan.

Plans include *restorative practices* —

- academic support
- meetings with a social worker
- community service
- substance use prevention education



They have a restorative reentry meeting.

Students have the opportunity to repair the harm they may have caused. Saying sorry, making amends, and working on yourself isn't easy.



Over time, students are more likely to succeed in school.

And all students are less likely to use substances.

Athletic Code of Conduct Changes

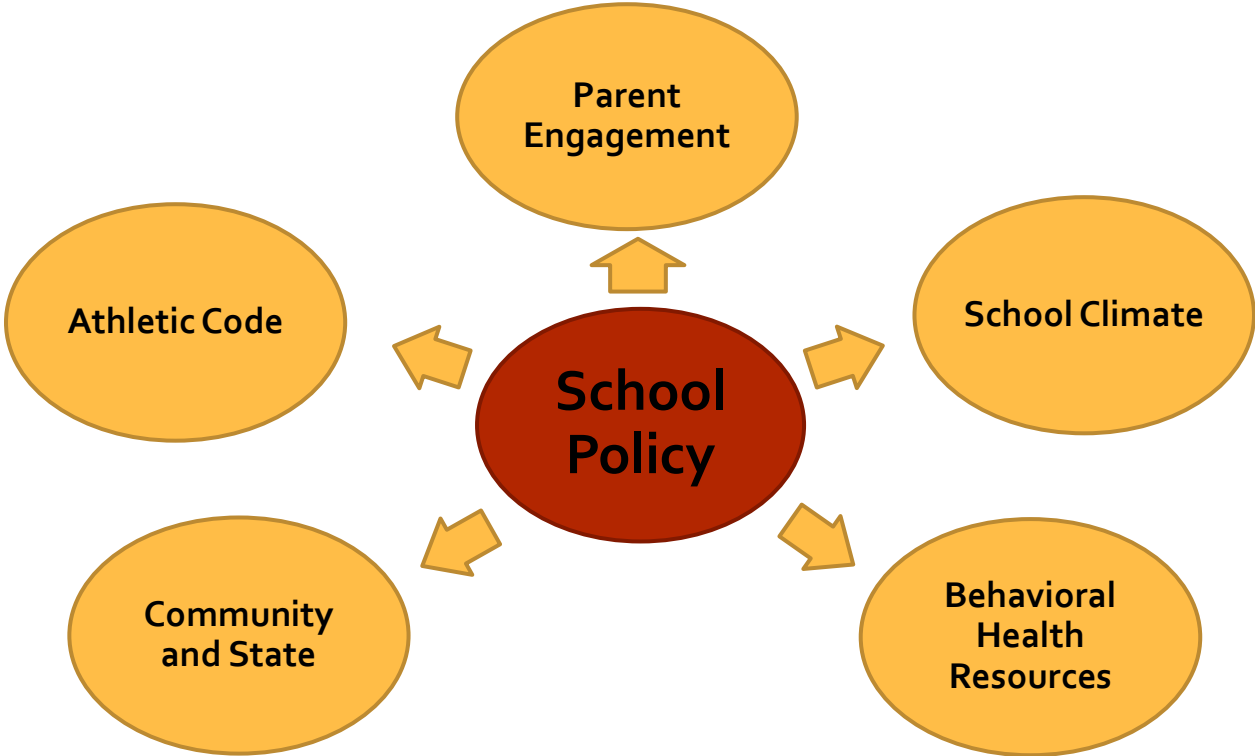
First infraction: 10-day probationary period

- Participates in practices and meetings
- Does not participate in games or competitions
- Meets with social worker, offered assessment and recommendations
- Restorative Process, with support of social worker
- Conversation with coach to end probationary period

Second infraction: 14-day probationary period

- Participates in practices and meetings
- Does not participate in games or competitions
- Meets with social worker, offered assessment and recommendations
- Restorative Process, with support of social worker
- Conversation with coach to end probationary period

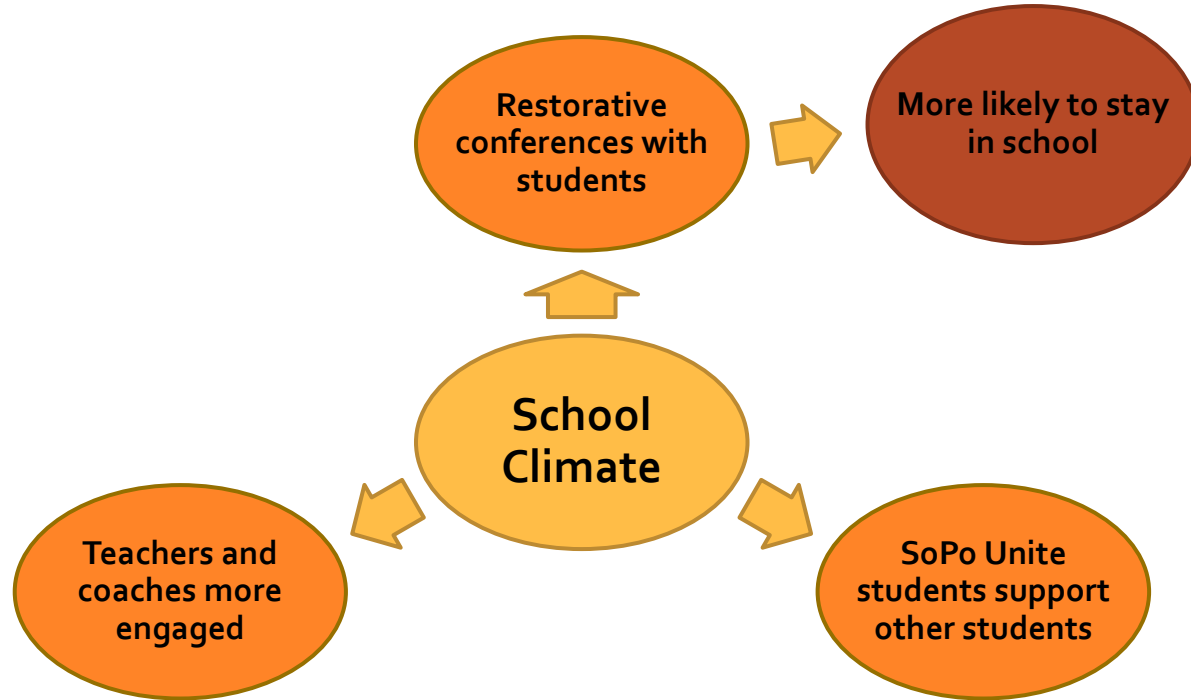
Ripple Effect of the Policy Change



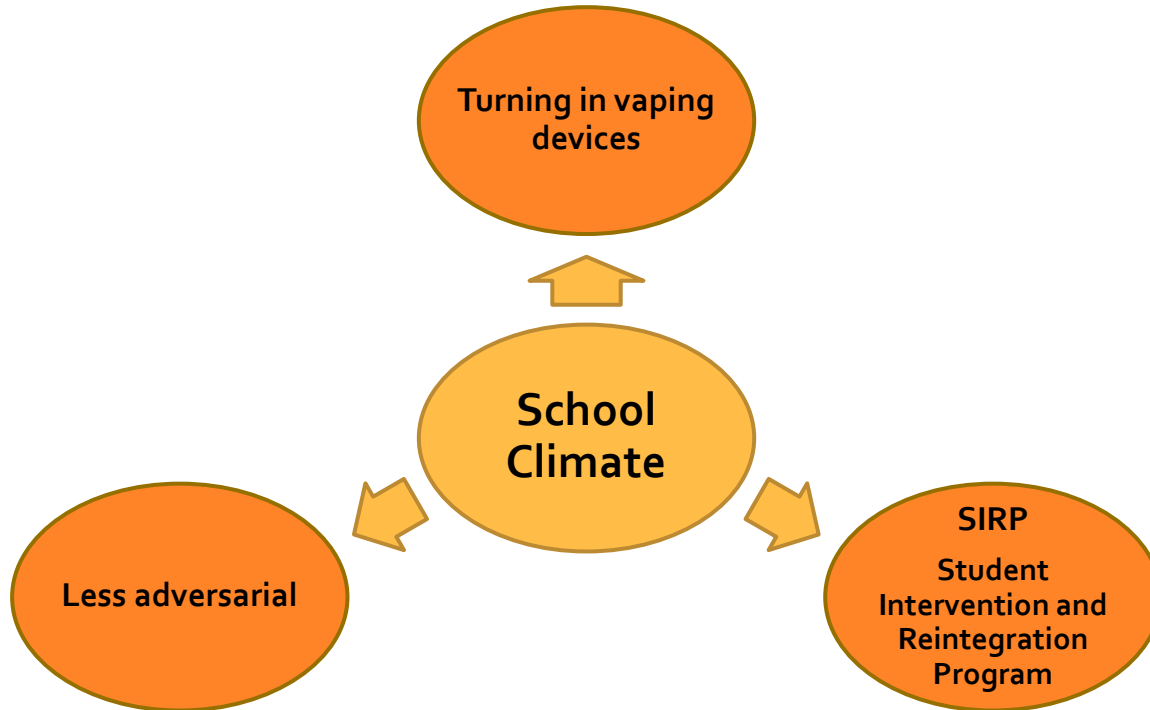


South Portland High School Snapshot

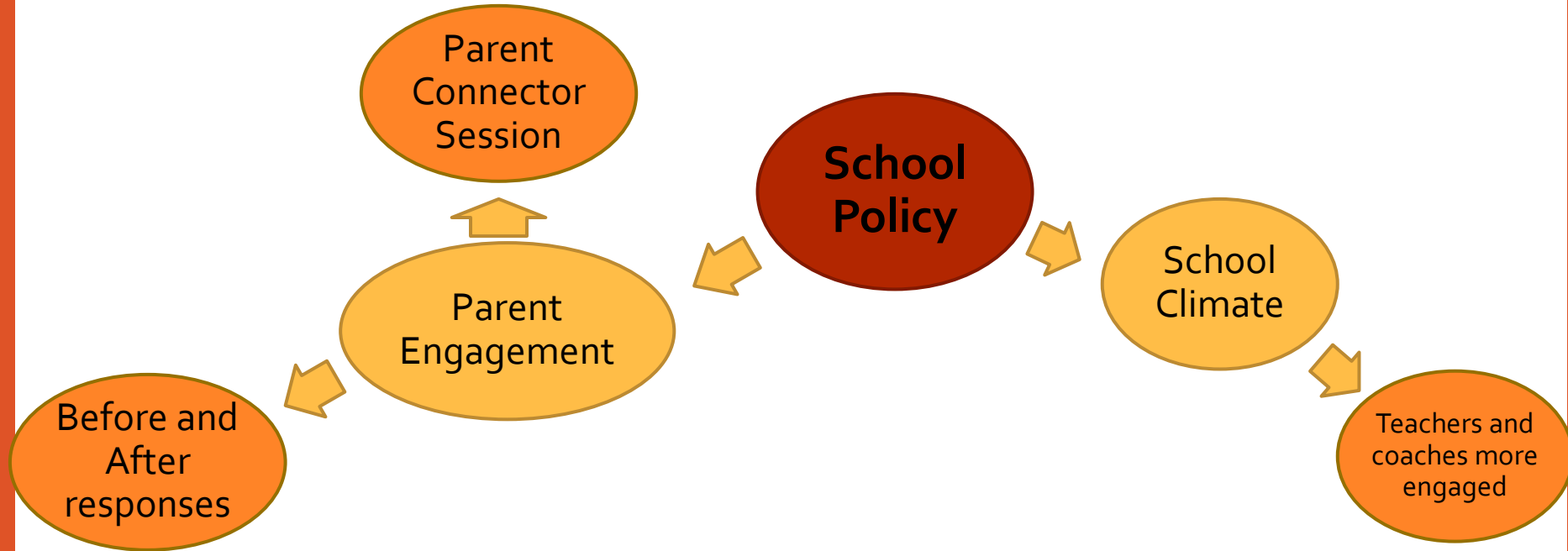
Kara Tierney-Trevor, SPHS Social Worker



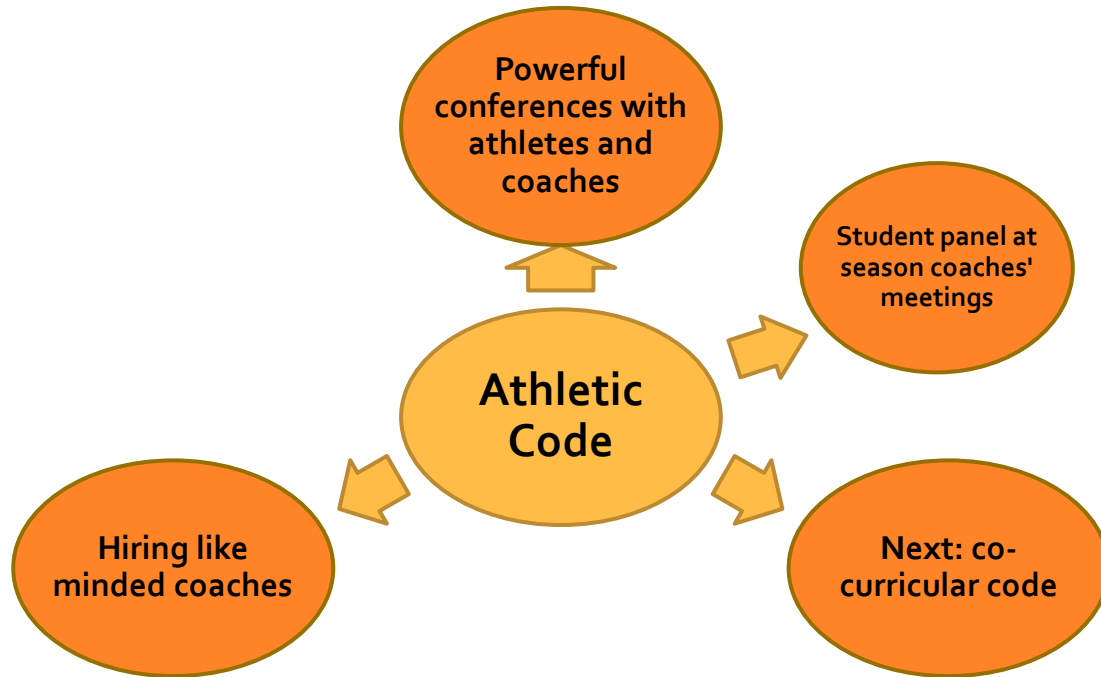
Al Giusto, SPHS School Resource Officer



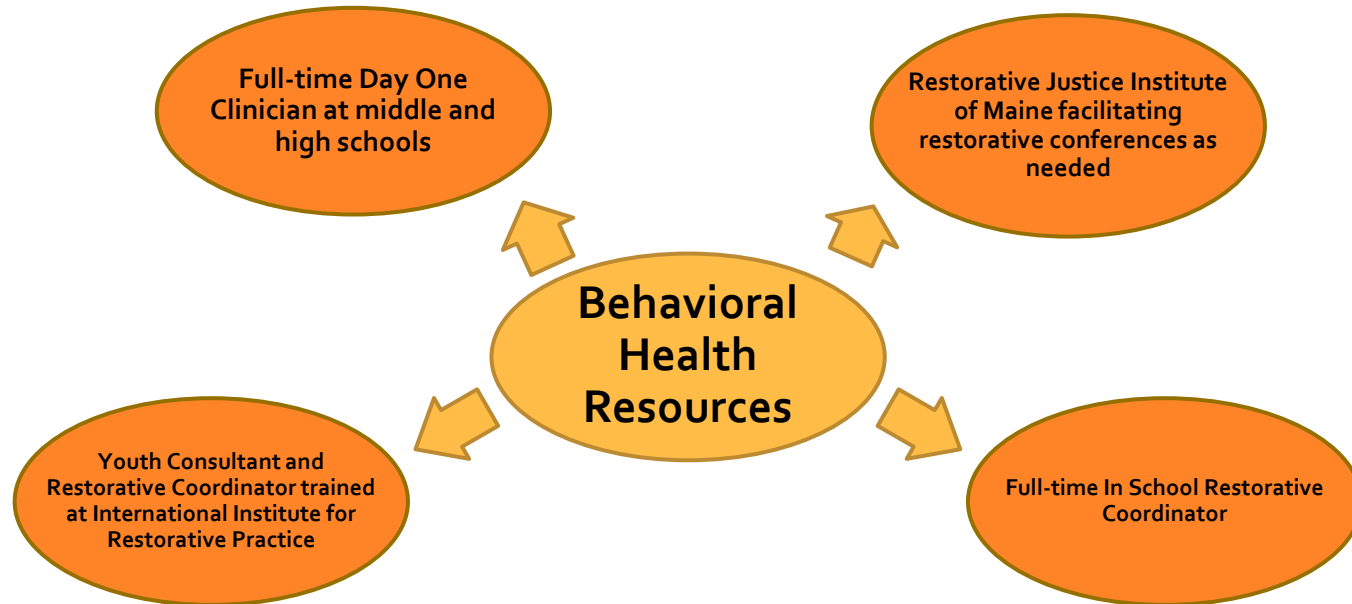
Kim Bennett, SPHS Assistant Principal



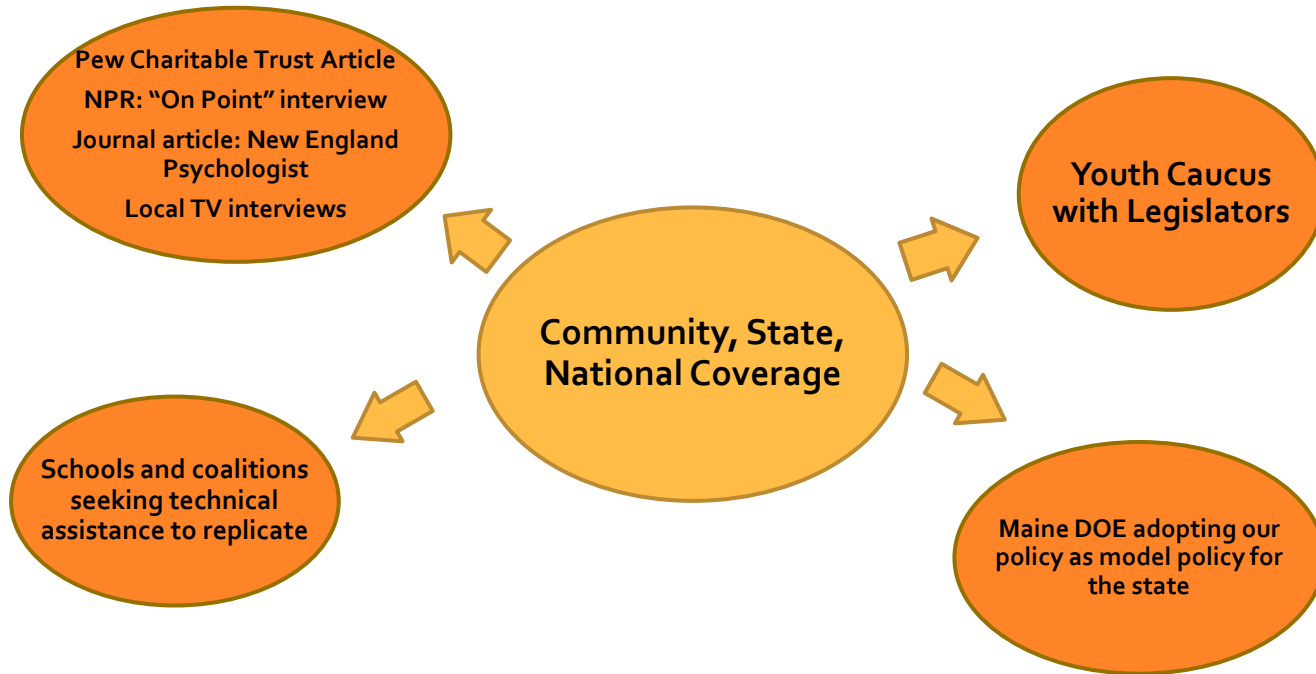
Kara Tierney-Trevor, SPHS Social Worker



LeeAnne Dodge, SoPo Unite Program Director



Liz Blackwell-Moore, Public Health Consultant





Assess and build capacity in your own communities

Building Capacity to Make Policy Change

What efforts have already happened in your community?

- Educate community and DFC Coalition on the harms of suspension and the benefits and application of restorative practices as an alternative
- Provide professional development to school staff on brain development, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and substance use prevention
- Develop partnership with police to divert youth substance use violations to early intervention programs or behavioral health treatment
- Provide training and networking opportunities for school administration in using restorative practices in a school setting
- Create a DFC goal of reducing suspensions and changing school policy from punitive to restorative
- Facilitate or participate in policy development meetings with school. Involve coalition members if possible (including students)
- Offer Restorative Practice training for school staff
- Frame as a health problem that requires a clinical response, an equity issue that increase health equity, a community problem that requires a community response (Choose one that fits your communities needs and values)
- Engage police, parents, school social work, and other key leaders in the community to speak to the benefits of a restorative approach to school substance use policy to the school board

In which sector do you think there is readiness to change in your community?

- Police
- Parents
- Students
- School staff
- Youth serving organizations (Recreation, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, etc)
- Other _____

Which efforts could you work on over the next year to increase the capacity of your community and school districts to make the policy change?

What additional resources might you need to build that capacity?



Parent engagement



Co-curricular Code



**On going communication of policy to students,
staff, parents**



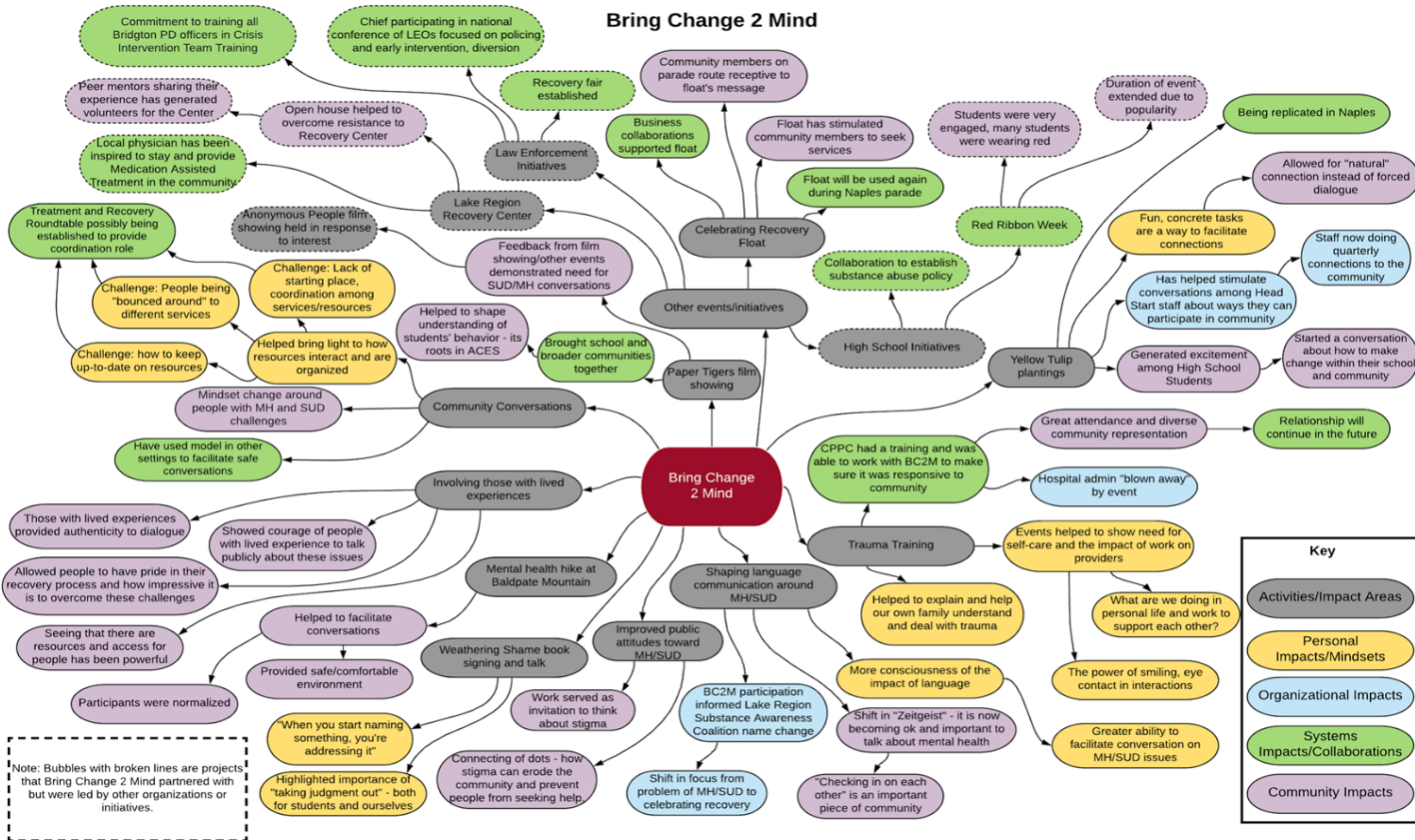
**Improving the response plan so that it more
consistently includes all parts (meaningful
community service)**

Next Steps for SoPo Unite

Ripple Effect Mapping

- As an evaluation and assessment tool for future work
- Link to national toolkit-
<https://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/190639>

Ripple Effects Mapping





Questions?

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