

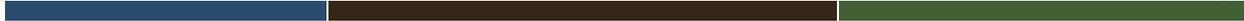


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YOLO CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

DJUSD ALTERNATIVE RESOLUTION SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT, SCHOOL YEAR 2015-16

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INTRODUCTION

In July 1, 2015, Yolo Conflict Resolution (YCRC) began providing alternative dispute resolution services as described by the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was approved by the DJUSD Board of trustees. Suggested alternative dispute resolution services include presentations, training, community mediation, and reporting. All services provided by YCRC are guided by restorative principles that encourage collaboration, inclusion, accountability, and reintegration in building and strengthening relationships and communities. This report is a summary of services provided during the school year 2015-16 and key lessons learned to inform the extension of YCRC services into the next school year, 2016-17.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION SERVICES

DISTRICT-WIDE OUTREACH

Purpose: Increase awareness and understanding among school communities, DJUSD administrators and staff, and related members of the general public regarding the purpose and scope of community mediation.

Total contract time: 7 hrs.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

At the beginning of the school year, YCRC contacted all school principals and PTA/PTO presidents to introduce YCRC, provide information about services, and request time to meet in person to learn about school specific needs. YCRC provided short presentations at a SPAC (Superintendent Parent Advisory Committee) and PTA/PTO meetings about the services that YCRC provides through the DJUSD/YCRC agreement and different ways that YCRC might be able to assist the school, particularly the parent community. YCRC was described as a resource to teachers for support and professional development, in addition to mediation services. Throughout the year, YCRC provided the PTA/PTO information about relevant YCRC community events and reminders about the services. YCRC met with principals for a more engaged discussion on particular needs of schools and outlined ways to refer cases to YCRC to address conflicts, particularly among staff. Table 1 provides a summary of schools that were part of the outreach effort.

TABLE 1. OUTREACH EFFORTS

SCHOOL	MEETING WITH PRINCIPAL	MEETING WITH PTA/PTO
Elementary Schools		
Birch Lane		✓
Cesar Chavez		✓
Korematsu	✓	
Marguerite Montgomery	✓	✓
North Davis		✓
Patwin		✓
Willett		✓
Junior High Schools		
Harper		✓
Holmes	✓	✓
DaVinci Charter Academy		✓
Senior High Schools		
Davis Senior High		✓
DaVinci Charter Academy		✓
Communitywide		
Superintendent Parent Advisory Committee (SPAC) Meeting		✓

LESSONS LEARNED:

This past year, YCRC focused on reaching out to the school communities with limited success. PTA/PTOs operate independently and have different communication mechanisms for information dissemination. YCRC also had no access to staff meetings. The following are suggestions for improving outreach and communication about services:

1. Send parents and staff a message from the schools' principals with information about YCRC services.
2. Send parents and staff a message from the superintendent with information about YCRC services.
3. Reach out to secondary school's department heads to inform them about YCRC services.
4. Provide short presentations at staff and/or union meetings.

TRAINING

Purpose: Increase conflict resolution capacity among DJUSD administrators, staff, and community members to help reduce formal complaints.

Total contract time: 12.5 hrs.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

This component of the MOU was not fully utilized throughout the year. YCRC provided training support to Kate Snow, Climate Coordinator, in facilitating restorative justice circle training to staff and administrators.

LESSONS LEARNED

Participants in training and in case development expressed the desire for training so they may be able to resolve ongoing work related conflicts and be better prepared to address conflicts with and among students.

1. YCRC can support and facilitate training in conflict resolution, communication skills, and restorative practices.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICES

Purpose: provide safe, neutral, and confidential conversations to address conflicts pertaining to district students and/or staff.

Total contract time:

- Case development: 20 hrs.
 - Mediations/Restorative Conferences: 14 hrs.
 - Circle process: 3.5 hrs.
-

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

YCRC received referrals from supervisors, administrators, the climate coordinator, administrative services, and student support services. YCRC followed up on requests by sending information about the services and by attempting to contact potential participants. During case development, YCRC worked with participants to clarify issues related to the conflict and to determine the best conflict resolution approach. The majority of the conflicts discussed during case development were work related and stemmed from feelings of being unappreciated, having limited resources, and due to differences in work styles and expectations. Only two cases addressed by YCRC were student related conflicts. YCRC facilitated 3 mediations (multiple sessions), 2 restorative conferences, and 2 circle conversations. A summary of cases is provided in Table 2.

TABLE 2. ADR CASES SUMMARY

ADR CASE	STATUS	ISSUE - PRIMARY	PARTICIPANTS
Mediations			
15-027	Mediation - Not Resolved	Work place conflict Communication Breakdown	Staff
15-036	Mediation - Written Agreement	Work place conflict Communication Breakdown Different understanding of roles and responsibilities	Staff
15-050	Mediation - Verbal Agreement	Work place conflict Communication Breakdown Different understanding of roles and responsibilities	Staff
15-052	Informational	General Information about services	Staff/Parent
16-003	Party Withdrawal	Work place conflict Communication Breakdown	Staff
16-011	Party Declined	Work place conflict Communication Breakdown	Teachers
16-016	Informational	Communication Breakdown	Parent/Administrator
16-025	Party Not Responding	Workplace conflict Communication breakdown	Staff
16-026	Consultation	Communication Breakdown	Teachers
16-028	Consultation	Communication Breakdown	Teachers
Conferences			
16-008	Restorative Conference	Student behavior	Students
16-032	Restorative Conference	Communication breakdown	Teachers
Circle Conversation			
15-068	Restorative Circle	Student behavior	Parent/Administrator
16-017	Restorative Circle	Community building Developing agreement	Students

PROCESS EVALUATIONS:

YCRC asked participants to provide feedback on the process immediately following the mediation. YCRC received 12 evaluations during the 2015-2016 DJUSD school year.

Satisfaction with the Outcome: 6 participants responded that they were “very satisfied” with the outcome. 5 participants were “somewhat satisfied” and 1 participant was “very

dissatisfied.” The participant who was dissatisfied commented that she was only dissatisfied with the outcome; she was very pleased with the mediators.

Skill of the Mediators: All 12 participants responded that the mediators were very skilled.

Impartiality of the Mediators: All 12 participants responded that the mediators were impartial, demonstrating neutrality and favoring neither party.

Efficiency of Time: 7 participants said that mediation would shorten the time to resolve the conflict. 1 participant said it would increase the amount of time. 3 participants said they didn’t know how it would affect the time to resolve the conflict, and 1 participant didn’t answer the question.

Using YCRC Mediation Services Again: 7 participants said “yes” they would use our services again. 1 participant said they would not use our services again. 4 participants didn’t answer the question.

LESSONS LEARNED:

A key barrier for participation in a conflict resolution process, particularly among staff, is that cases are often referred to YCRC while there are already ongoing complaint processes or disciplinary actions in place. At this point, those involved have been dealing with the conflict for a long time, their understanding of the conflict is entrenched and they are less likely to be willing to engage in a process that is based on voluntary participation, suspending judgement, and willingness to listen and consider all perspectives. In some cases, parties did not want to participate in a mediated conversation until a formal process has gone through.

1. Focusing on outreach and ensuring that DJUSD affiliates understand that conflict resolution can be used early in a conflict to help clarify misunderstanding, build relationships, and develop guidelines for working together, can alleviate the escalation of conflicts in many cases.

Case development is a powerful way for parties to deal with conflicts regardless of whether or not they participate in a conflict resolution process. Offering a one on one conversation with individuals helped them to think through the conflict and to identify ways that they can address ongoing issues even if the other party was unwilling to engage in a conflict resolution process. YCRC provides a neutral, safe, and confidential space for individuals to think through their conflict.

2. Most case development was provided by phone to accommodate the schedule of the individuals. It would be helpful to be able to meet in person with the explicit support of DJUSD to allow time for such conversations.

Conflicts among staff were often rooted in differences in work styles, unclear expectations and understanding of roles and responsibilities, and limited resources (i.e. shared workspace, limited time to accomplish tasks).

3. Conflict resolution training and community building circles could be a powerful way for staff to come together and develop foundational guidelines for working together. Training and conversations at the beginning of the school year can help create a strong sense of community and alleviate some of the conflicts that emerge throughout the year. YCRC has seen success in the community with these types of trainings and workshops.
4. Students who participate in team activities would benefit from community building circles to help establish cultural norms and expectations for working together.

ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose: Summarize the scope of conflict resolution services that were provided by YCRC in response to DJUSD referrals

Total contract time: 8 hrs.

SUGGESTED YCRC SERVICES FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17

In the coming year, YCRC is looking forward to providing conflict resolution services to DJUSD affiliates as well as supporting the Davis Police Department youth focused restorative justice/restorative practice efforts. Based on last year's requests for services and the potential for increased awareness and use of conflict resolution services, it is recommended that YCRC continue to provide presentations, training, and restorative justice practices (including mediations, conferences, and circle) and support DJUSD staff in ongoing restorative practices.

DISTRICTWIDE OUTREACH

Increase awareness and understanding among school communities, DJUSD administrators and staff, and related members of the general public regarding the purpose and scope of community mediation and restorative principles:

- Provide presentations/training to principals and department heads on the nature of conflict and how to identify when conflict resolution is needed, appropriate means for addressing conflict and the use of conflict resolution processes (mediation, conferences, and circles). Presentations can be jointly led by DJUSD staff, union representatives, and YCRC staff.
- Encourage principals and department heads to invite YCRC to provide presentations to staff early in the year at staff meetings.

CONSULTATION

Work with the DJUSD Climate office and support DJUSD staff who provide restorative practices and training as needed.

TRAINING/FACILITATION

- Provide restorative practices and conflict resolution skills training to staff in order to increase conflict resolution capacity among DJUSD administrators, staff and community to help reduce formal complaints.
- Provide opportunities for staff teams to come together to discuss ongoing multiparty conflicts as needed as part of training.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICES

Provide mediations, restorative conferences, and community circles to address ongoing conflicts and develop guidelines for engagement.

ANNUAL REPORT

Summarize the scope of conflict resolution services provided by YCRC in the course of the 2016-2017 school year, including hours expended in each service area, number of referrals, number of and general category of service for each conflict, and suggestions for subsequent year's contract.