



A Compelling Story on Keeping Kids in School

March 8, 2010

Dear DPS Community:

In the summer of 2008, the Denver Public Schools worked collaboratively with **Padres Unidos**, the Denver Police Department, and the Denver District Attorney's office to change its discipline policy to focus more on embracing restorative justice while having students take responsibility for the misbehavior, repairing the harm, and keeping students safe and in school.

As a result of the policy change and the great work of the educators in our schools, the number of out-of-school suspensions in our district is down about 6,000—a drop of 44%—over the past six years. We need to do everything we can to help our students make a strong connection to their schools, and that's especially important for at-risk students. Our high schools are doing that in a number of areas, and it's paying off in higher enrollment, attendance, and students on-track to graduate numbers (http://communications.dpsk12.org/assets/js/tiny_mce/plugins/filemanager/files/stimulus/HS%20success%20slides2.pdf).

Last week, Channel 9 aired a report on these efforts, spotlighting the students and the school and community leaders who are having the tough talks that are a part of restorative justice and who are—in the process—strengthening that student-school connection. The report does a compelling job of telling the story. Please take a few minutes to watch it following this link:

<http://www.9news.com/news/education/article.aspx?storyid=133771&catid=129>

*Best,
Tom*

For more information, contact the Communication Office at (720) 423-3414 or e-mail us at communications_office@dpsk12.org.