



Crotona International
High School
Bronx, NY

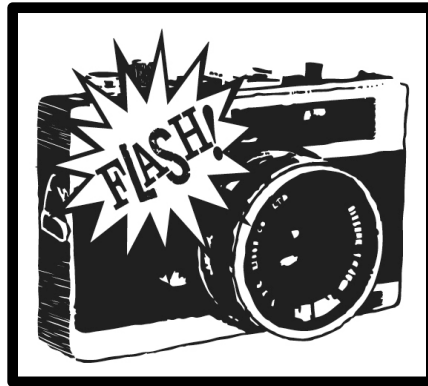


[Snapshot]

School: Crotona International High School

Borough: Bronx, NY

Author: Liana Maris, Assistant Principal, 2014



- Currently grades 9, 10, 11
- 250 students
- Demographics - 86% Latino/a, 10% African American, 2% Asian American and 3% European American.
- 100% Title I eligible,
- Impact School—not yet
- Scanning? Yes
- Approximately 10 School Safety Agents

[Testimonial]

Author: Liana Maris



The Fairness Committee of Crotona International fits within our restorative justice model of school discipline. Discussions emphasize the violation of community core values, not the breaking of rules. A Fairness Committee is a formal meeting of students and adults to hear the concerns of any community member who feels that a core value has been violated. The Committee inspires self-reflection by confronting a member of the community with his or her actions and how they have affected others. The group decides how to repair the community after actions have violated its values and how to reintegrate the member of the community who has violated our values back into the culture of the school.

The Fairness Committee is democratic and includes all teachers and students. It includes 6-8 people: one facilitator, 3-5 student committee members, and the two people who are involved in the value violation. Fairness Committee members rotate for each case. Serving on a Fairness Committee is a privilege and a duty: If a student is randomly selected to serve, he/she can be excused only in the case of a conflict of interest, personal circumstances (like friendship) that make it hard to be objective or illness. There are certain violations that may require legal action or other disciplinary actions in addition to Fairness. In these cases, a Fairness Committee Meeting may be postponed.

[Tools]



Fairness Protocol

Meeting time: approximately 60 minutes Meeting place: classroom or 322

Introduction (facilitator) – The facilitator introduces the group and explains the basic ground rules, including openness, following protocol, and confidentiality. The facilitator gives an overview of the protocol and time guidelines.

Explanation (the harmed) – The person who called for the Fairness Committee Meeting explains, uninterrupted, why s/he asked for it. S/he is asked to explain which core value s/he believes has been violated.

Explanation (the harmer) – The person who was brought to the Fairness Committee explains his or her side of the story, also uninterrupted.

Questions (panelists) – The panel asks questions of both people to obtain a more complete and holistic picture of the situation at hand. This process has no beginning or end and is dependent on the context of the situation and the nature of the dialogue. The intent is to come to some agreement or understanding among all parties. At times, this happens easily and other times this requires much more work. As the panelists question the two individuals, the Facilitator uses the guiding questions to keep the committee on task of helping everyone understand the roots of the issue and how the damages can be repaired.

Completion (Facilitator) – The facilitator guides the discussion toward reparation of the harm done to the individual and the community. This sometimes includes actions taken after the meeting, which the Facilitator will follow-up with the individuals involved.

Guiding Questions

Clarifying Questions

Who is involved?

When did it happen?

Where does this take place?

Restorative Justice Questions

What happened or has been happening?

What were/are you thinking?

How were/are you feeling (ask the person who was affected by this)?

Who else has been affected by this?

What do you need now so that the harm can be repaired?

How can we involve everyone who has been affected in finding a way forward? "How can everyone do things differently in the future?"

Fairness Committee Request Form Content

Today's Date:

Team and Class:

Harmed (Your Name):

Harmer:

What happened? (Please include date and location.)

Who was affected by this?

What value was violated?

Are there any students you would like to invite to this Fairness Committee?

When are you available to meet?

Tuesday, 3:05-4:05 ____

Wednesday, 3:30-4:30 ____

Thursday, 3:30-4:30 ____

Friday, 2:45-3:45 ____

Fairness Committee Invitation/ Reminder Content

Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2012

Time: 2:15-3:15 pm

Room:

Facilitator:

Involved:

Panelists:

Confirmed: Yes/No

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

Edited by Liana Maris, Assistant Principal

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development is a tool that we use every year to begin the staff's professional development discussion on Restorative Justice. We engage in an activity and discuss the stages of development that influence our students' decisions in daily life. We then brainstorm ways our school can provide opportunities for students to participate in decision-making when a core value is violated.

Essential Questions: Where are we? Where are our students? How can we provide opportunities to develop morally?

Punishment and Obedience Orientation: I make decisions based on obedience and deference to power. Mostly, I try to avoid punishment. I have no respect for underlying moral order. "The last time I did that I got punished, so I won't do that again."

Self Interest Orientation: I make decisions based on my own best interest. I may do something for another person, but only if it will benefit me in some way. "What's in it for me?"

Interpersonal Concordance or "Good boy - Nice Girl" orientation: I make decisions to please others and conform to "natural" behavior and normal behavior, to fit in. "I want to be liked...and apparently, being 'good' makes people like me."

The "Law and Order" Orientation: I make decisions based on authority, fixed rules and maintenance of social order. Just give me some guidelines to follow. "If one person breaks this rule, then everyone will... so I better do it."

Social-Contract Legalistic Orientation: I make decisions based on the general welfare of society. I support democracy and decisions that meet "the greatest good for the greatest number of people."

Universal Ethical-principle Orientation: I make decisions based on universal principles of justice that I believe not only inform authorities and laws, but also trump established laws and rules. I value respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons. "I know that's not right... and I don't care what the rule tells me to do - I can't do it and I won't do it."

Poems for Circle Opening/Closing Ceremony

“It is important to always open and close a circle in a good way. This is true of any class. There should be a clear opening and closing. Opening is a ritual, and ritual is very important to people. While adolescents may seem to reject ritual on its face, what they are really rejecting is empty ritual. The ritual of the circle, especially the opening, builds community and provides continuity. Opening and closing every day bridges one class session to the next. The opening ritual separates this process from the rest of the day. It provides familiarity and reinforces trust among the participants.”—Greg Lewis, “Teaching and Learning In Circle”

This is one of many ideas for circle openings and closings included in *Heart of Hope: A Guide for Using Peacemaking Circles to Develop Emotional Literacy, Promote Healing, & Build Healthy Relationships* by Boyes-Watson and Pranis.

Crotona uses these Circle Poems during staff professional development. We begin all our staff development meetings with an opening circle, and we sometimes use a closing circle as well.

“Anyway” by Mother Teresa

People are often unreasonable, and self-centered.
FORGIVE THEM ANYWAY.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives.
BE KIND ANYWAY.

If you are honest, people may cheat you.
BE HONEST ANYWAY.

If you find happiness, people may be jealous.
BE HAPPY ANYWAY.

The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow.
DO GOOD ANYWAY.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough.
GIVE YOUR BEST ANYWAY.

In the final analysis, it is between you and your heart.
IT WAS NEVER BETWEEN YOU AND THEM ANYWAY.

- Mother Teresa

- **“Turning to One Another” by Margaret Wheatley**

There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about.

Ask: “What’s possible?” not “What’s wrong?” Keep asking.

Notice what you care about.

Assume that many others share your dreams.

Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters.

Talk to people you know.

Talk to people you don’t know.

Talk to people you never talk to.

Be intrigued by the differences you hear. Expect to be surprised.

Treasure curiosity more than certainty.

Invite in everybody who cares to work on what’s possible.

Acknowledge that everyone is an expert about something.

Know that creative solutions come from new connections.

Remember, you don’t fear people whose story you know.

Real listening always brings people closer together.

Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world.

Rely on human goodness.

Stay together.