

Good intentions are not enough: The science of implementing high quality restorative practices in schools

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Our time together today

Dr. Anne Gregory (15 minutes)

- Racial discipline gap
- Importance of measuring the implementation of Restorative Practice (RP) in schools
- Racial discipline gap and RP implementation study
- 5 minutes of Q and A

Alycia Davis (15 minutes)

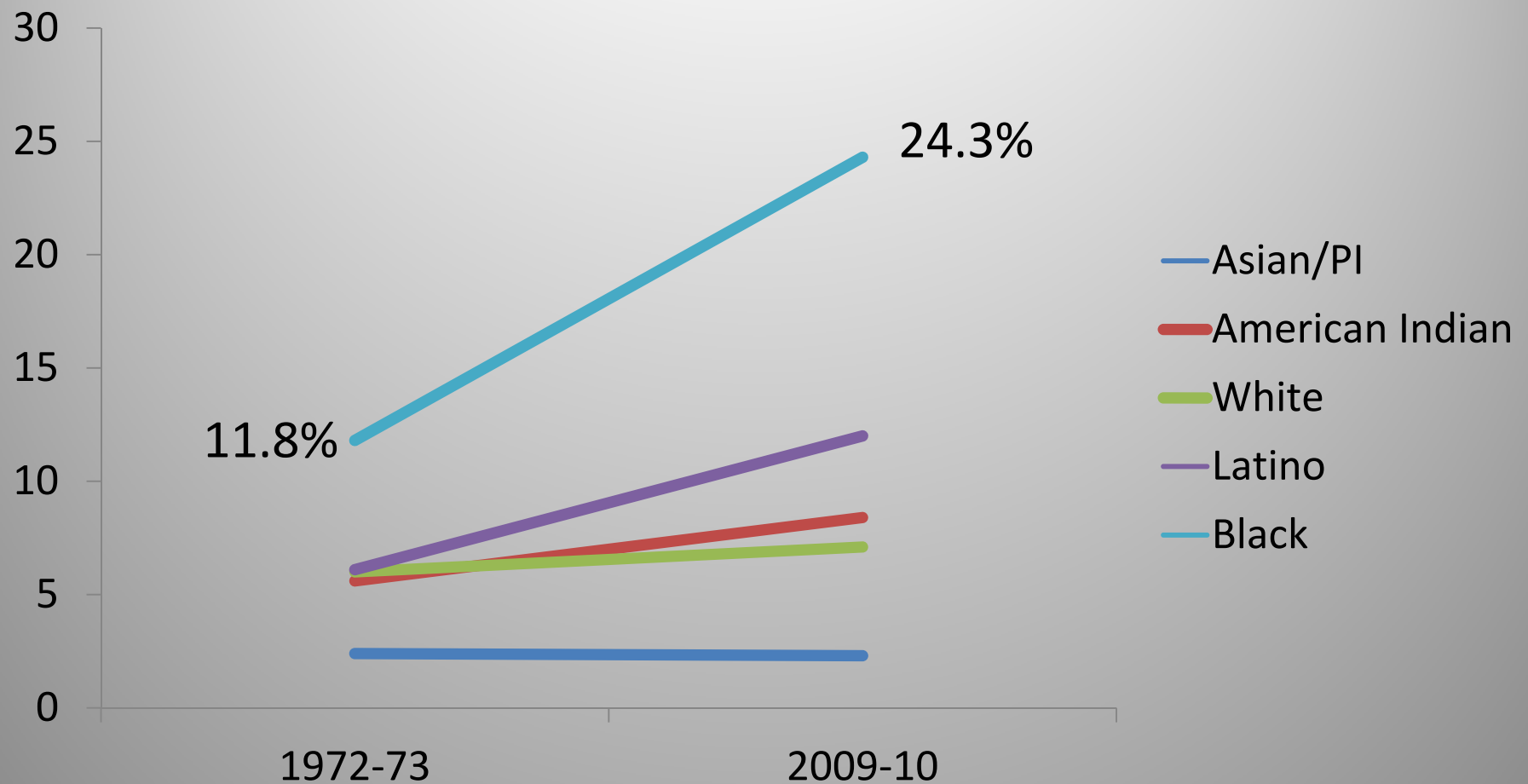
- *RP-Observe*- a systematic observational tool of RP circles
- 5 minutes of Q and A

5-10 minute larger discussion

Small scale study

- Do classrooms with high frequency implementation of Restorative Practices (RP) have positive teacher-student relationships among all racial and ethnic groups as seen through:
 - 1) student experience of their teachers as respectful?
 - 2) infrequent use of teacher-issued referrals for misconduct/defiance across racial and ethnic groups?

Secondary School Suspension Rates*



Source: Data from the U.S. Department of Education's 2009-10 Civil Rights Data Collection
Figure from Losen, D. & Martinez, T. (2013) *Out of School & Off Track: The overuse of Suspensions in American Middle and High Schools*.
* Based on non-duplicated student counts.

Latino students

- A national study of 10th graders showed that:
 - Latino 10th graders were twice as likely as White students to be issued an out-of-school suspension.
 - Findings accounted for student- and teacher-reported misbehavior (Finn & Servoss, 2013).

Individual student characteristics

Most likely to get disciplined:

- male, with a disability, lower achievement
- Lower socioeconomic status

But notwithstanding these characteristics...

racial disparities still exist



BRE^AAKING SCHOOLS' RULES:

A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates
to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement

JUSTICE  CENTER
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

PPRI Public Policy
Research Institute

Race remains a predictor of the gap...

The Texas longitudinal study recently reported:

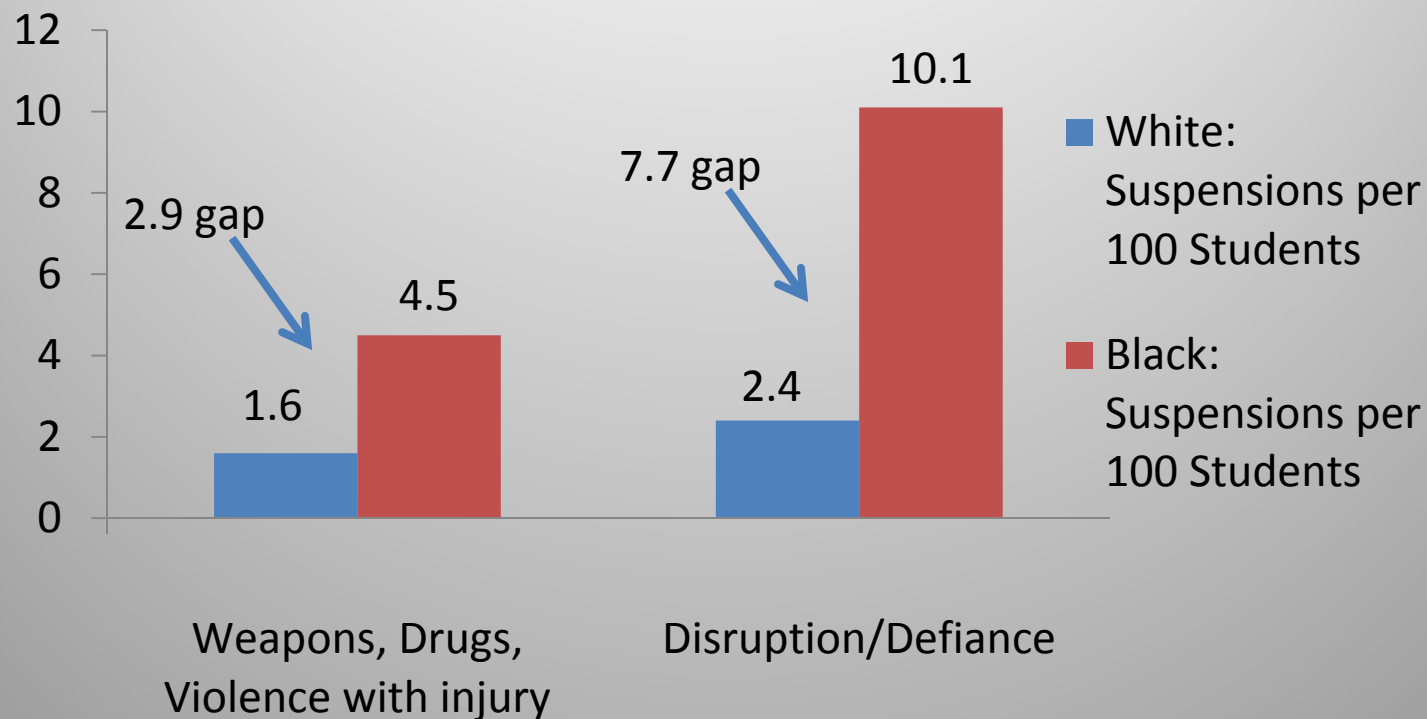
“Multivariate analyses, which enabled researchers to control for 83 different variables in isolating the effect of race alone on disciplinary actions, found that African-American students had a 31 percent higher likelihood of a school discretionary action, compared to otherwise identical white and Hispanic students” (Fabelo et al., 2011).

Racial gap is not the same across all reasons for discipline

A statewide Texas study showed that:

- “Within the ninth-grade school year, African-American students had about a **23 percent lower** likelihood of facing a mandatory school disciplinary action...compared to otherwise identical white students.”
- “Within the ninth-grade year, African-American students had about a **31 percent higher** likelihood of a discretionary school disciplinary action, compared to the rate for otherwise identical white students” (p. 45, Fabelo et al., 2011).

Frequent and Disparate Use of Suspension for Minor Offenses under Disruption/Defiance Compared with Serious Offenses by Race



Source: Figure from Civil Rights Letter to Governor Brown, Their analyses from CALPADS data from CDOE, 2011-12.

Teachers and African American students

- Compared to White students, African American students tend to experience less support and more unfair treatment from their teachers.
- Teachers have more negative perceptions of African American students.
 - Seen as more defiant and disruptive
 - Issued harsher disciplinary consequences

(Bradshaw, Mitchell, O'Brennan, & Leaf, 2010; Fabelo et al., 2011; Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Horner, Fireman, & Wang, 2010; Thompson, 2012; Wald & Kurlaender, 2003)

Theorizing about RP and the racial discipline gap

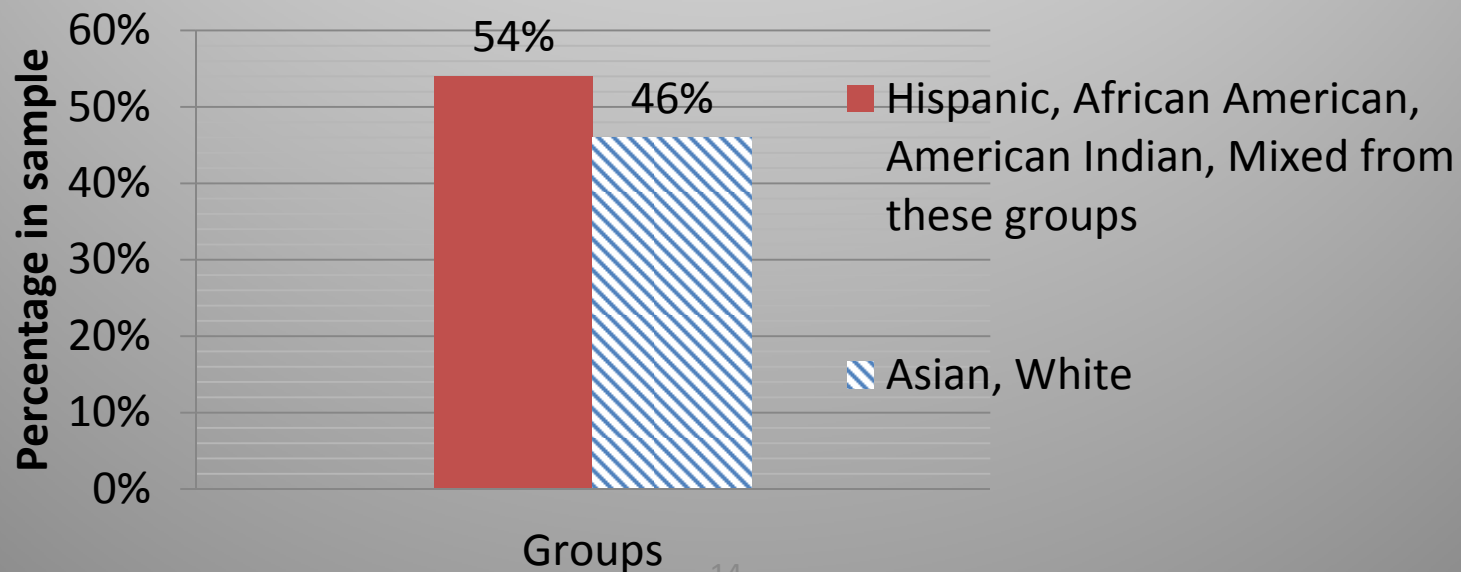
- RP's focus on developing an authoritative climate in the classroom may elicit trusting teacher-student interactions in which students of all racial and ethnic groups feel supported and treated fairly:
 - Sensitivity to individual student perspectives and the collective voice of students,
 - Consistent and fair accountability for jointly-developed classroom rules
 - may reduce the likelihood that students in marginalized groups will be excluded from the classroom for discipline reasons.

Small scale study

- Do classrooms with high frequency implementation of RP have positive teacher-student relationships among all racial and ethnic groups as seen through:
 - 1) student experience of their teachers as respectful?
 - 2) infrequent use of teacher-issued referrals for misconduct/defiance across racial and ethnic groups?

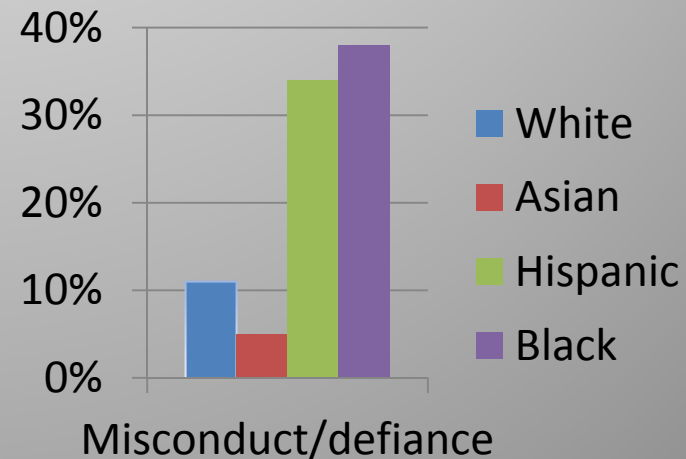
Study sites

- Two diverse high schools in first year of SaferSanerSchools RP implementation.
- Small sample of mostly White teachers ($N = 29$)
- Student sample ($N = 412$):



Discipline Referral Data

In the 2010-2011 school year, close to a third of Hispanic and African American students (34%, 38%, respectively) compared to 5% and 11% of Asian and White students (respectively) were issued referrals for misconduct/defiance.



Measuring RP Implementation

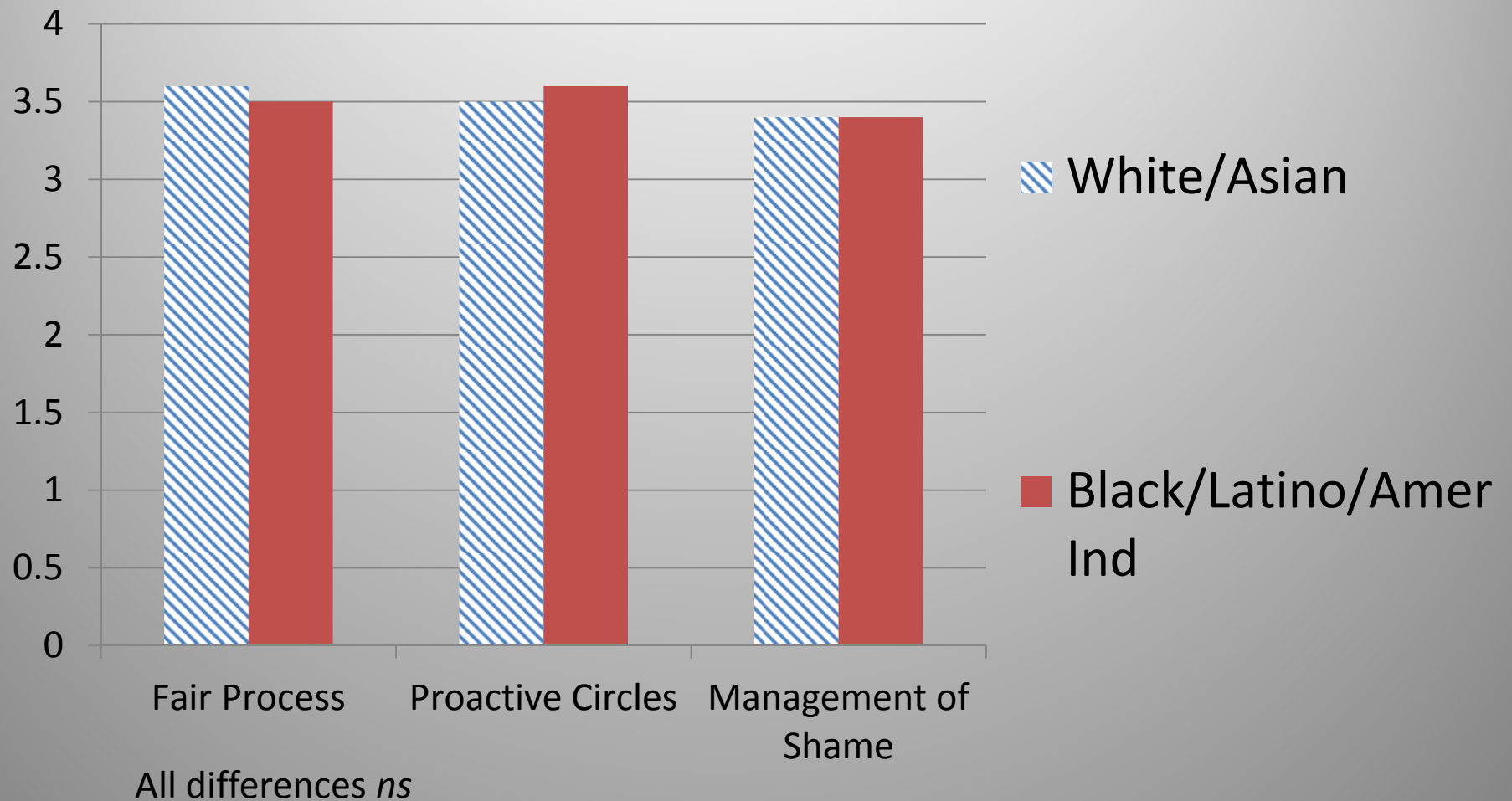
Students answered all items on a five-point scale, rating the degree to which the teacher engaged in the particular RP approach (i.e., not at all, rarely, sometimes, often, and always).

- The Affective Statements Scale (3 items, alpha = .59) included “My teacher is respectful when talking about feelings.”
- The Restorative Questions Scale (4 items, alpha = .81) included, “When someone misbehaves, my teacher responds to negative behaviors by asking students questions about what happened, who has been harmed and how the harm can be repaired.”
- The Proactive Circles Scale (4 items, alpha = .75) included, “My teacher uses circles to provide opportunities for students to share feelings, ideas and experiences.”
- The Fair Process Scale (4 items, alpha = .73) included, “Asks students for their thoughts and ideas when decisions need to be made that affect the class.”
- The Responsive Circles Scale (6 items, alpha = .72) included, “My teacher uses circles to respond to behavior problems and repair harm caused by misbehavior.”
- The Management of Shame Scale (4 items, alpha = .71) included, “My teacher acknowledges the feelings of students when they have misbehaved.”

Teacher ratings

- Teachers RP implementation on parallel scales:
 - Affective Statements Scale**, (8 items, alpha = .80),
 - Restorative Questions Scale** (7 items, alpha = .90),
 - Proactive Circles Scale** (8 items, alpha = .59),
 - Fair Process Scale** (6 items, alpha = .93),
 - Responsive Circles Scale** (10 items, alpha = .76),
 - Management of Shame Scale** (7 items, alpha = .93).

Experience of RP implementation similar across student race and ethnicity



Measuring quality of teacher-student relationships

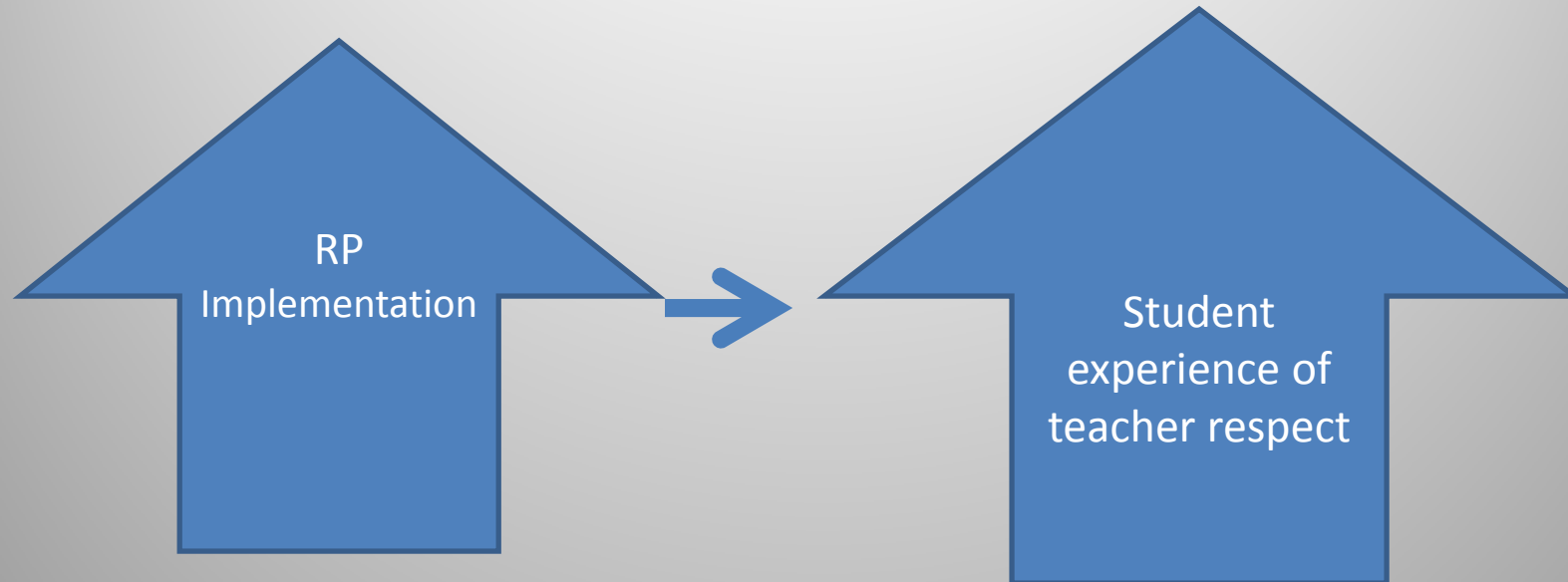
- **Teacher Respect scale**

- On the student survey
- 4-point likert scale, “not at all true” to “very true.”
- They indicated whether the teacher:
 - “liked them,”
 - “interrupted them when they had something to say” (rev. scored),
 - “did not enjoy having them in class” (rev. scored),
 - “never listened to their side” (rev. scored).

- **School discipline records:**

- “Misconduct/defiance” discipline referrals included disrespect, insubordination, profanity/obscenity, misconduct, and disorderly conduct.

Hypothesis 1



- The relationship between RP implementation and teacher respect would not vary by student race/ethnicity

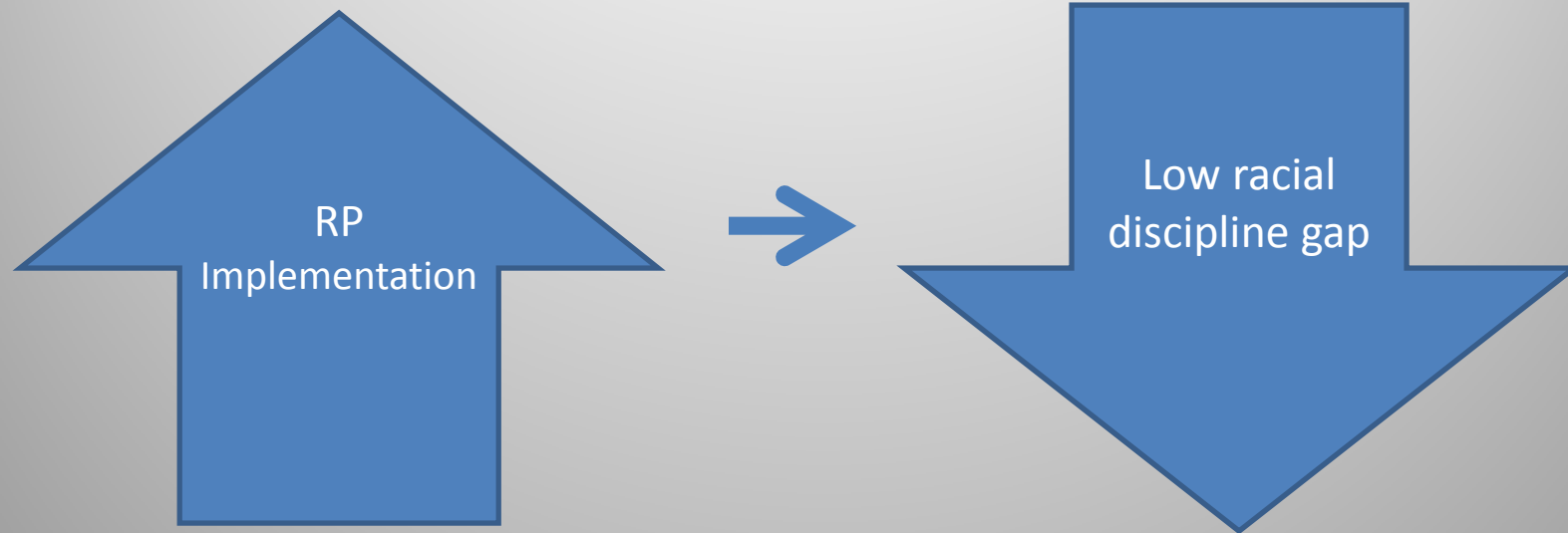
HLM Analysis with Student-Reported Teacher Respect as Level-1 Outcome

Measure	Model 1 Estimate (SE)	Model 2 Estimate (SE)
Level 1 Student-level predictors		
Race (1: Hispanic/Black; 0: Asian/White) β_{1j}	-.02 (.05)	-.02 (.05)
Student Cooperation _{ij} β_{2j}	.20** (.06)	.19** (.06)
Level 2 Teacher-level predictors		
Student report_RP_Implement _j γ_{01}		.12** (.04)
Teacher report_RP_Implement _j γ_{02}		-.05 (.03)

Findings

- Students reporting greater implementation of the RP elements tended to perceive those teachers as more respectful.
- We also found that the link between RP implementation and teacher respect was the same for Asian/White versus Hispanic/African-Amer., Amer. Indian groups.

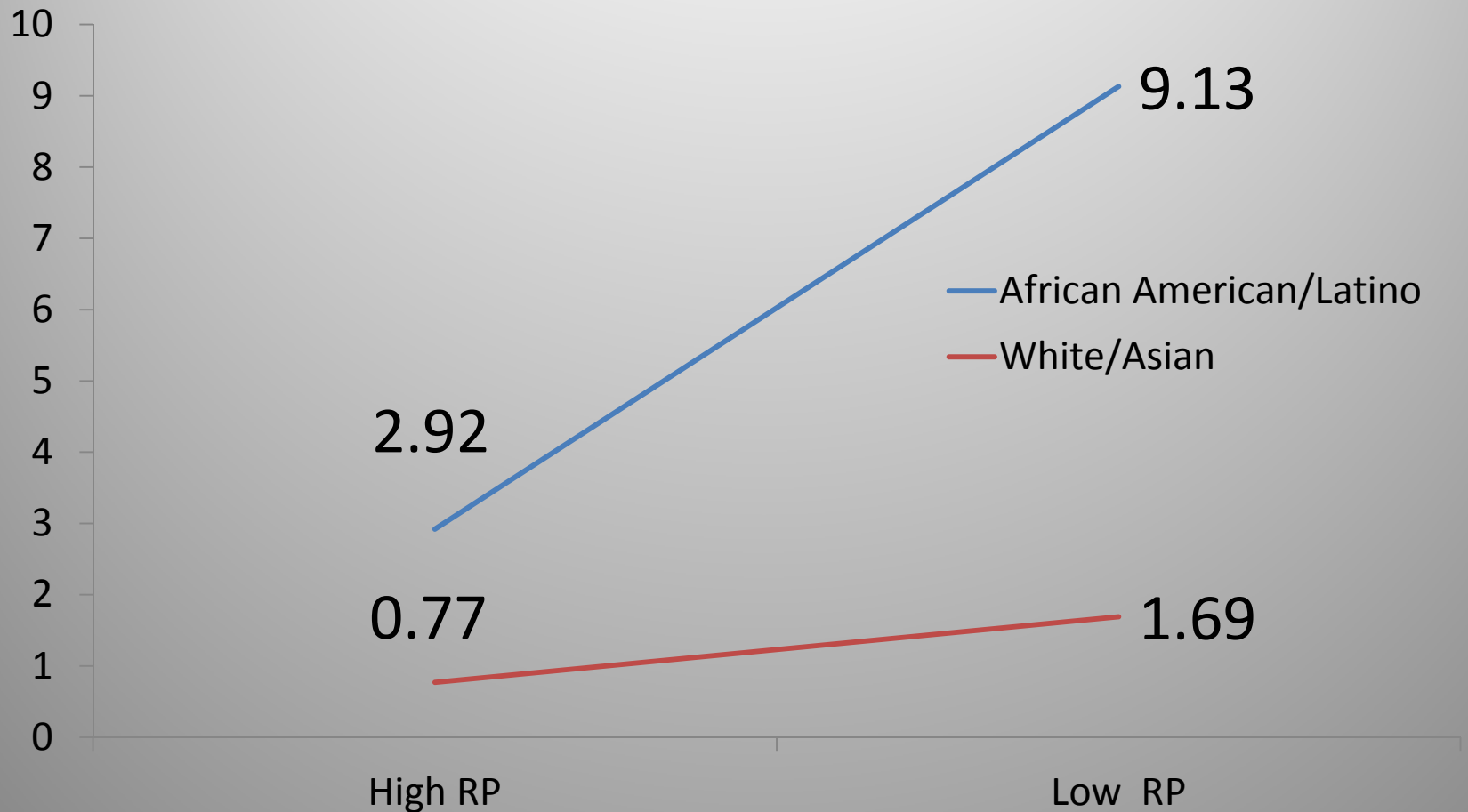
Hypothesis 2



Regression Models for Number of Defiance referrals

	White/Asian Referrals	Afr-Amer/Hispanic Referrals
R ²	.11	.18*
Standardized Betas		
-Teacher-reported RP Implementation	-.01	-.04
- Student-reported RP Implementation	-.34+	-.44*

Teachers above ($n = 16$) and below ($n = 13$) the mean on student-perceived RP implementation and their misconduct/defiance referrals



Summary of study

- Teachers who were perceived by their students as frequently implementing many of the RP practices tended to have better relationships with their students, compared to infrequent implementers of RP.
- This was seen in the degree to which students felt respected by their teachers and teachers' use of disruption/defiance disciplinary referrals.
- **High frequency/quality RP implementation has promise for narrowing the racial discipline gap.**
- Accepted for publication in a special issue of the *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation (JEPC) on Restorative Justice and School Consultation: Current Science and Practice*

Questions?

Comments?

(Five minutes)

Observing the RP Circle Process

Anne Gregory, Ph.D.

Jennifer Gerewitz

Kathleen Clawson

Alycia Davis

Joshua Korth

Circle Clip (1)

- *The Worst School I've Ever Been To*
- Video loaned by IIRP and produced by Safer Saner Schools

RP-Observe Manual



RP-Observe

- *Why do we need a systematic, reliable and valid observation tool of RP?*
- Measures quality of implementation
 - helps observers and trainers reliably rate the quality of circles
- Sheds light on why program may or may not be working
 - Id strengths and challenges in circles

RP-Observe

- *RP-Observe* is designed for observers to record the quality of the following two IIRP Elements of Restorative Practices
 - Proactive Circle
 - Responsive Circle
- RP-Observe has mainly been tested on Proactive Circles

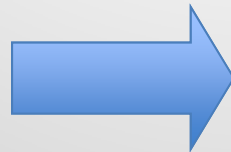
How do raters use the RP-Observe manual?

Coding sheet

- In the manual, for each dimension, there are examples of observable low-range (1, 2), mid-range (3, 4, 5), and high-range behavior (6, 7).
- Examples and indicators of certain behaviors are used as a *guideline* to decide how to rate a dimension.
- Coders are encouraged to be objective and to only code observable behaviors.

RP-Observe Constructs

Structure



Circle rules

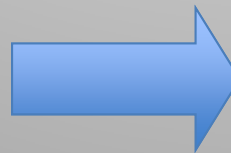
Support



Positive teacher-student and student-student interactions

Teacher and student responsiveness

Student Voice



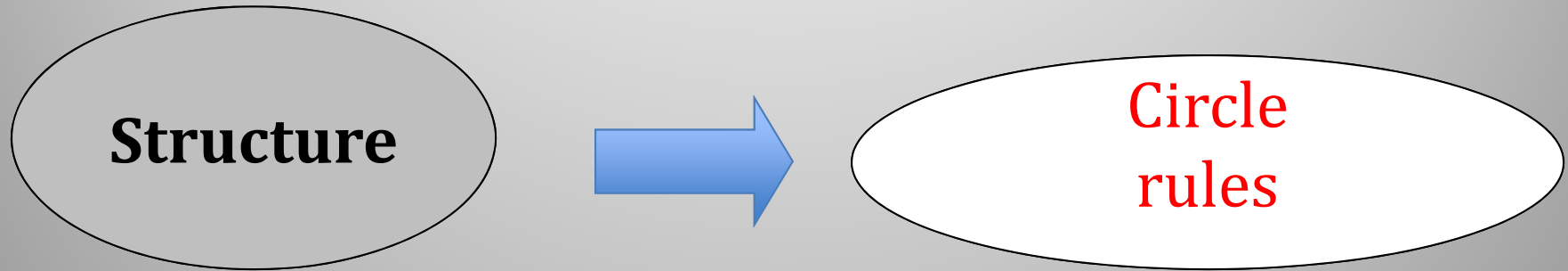
Relevancy

Autonomy

Risk-taking

Problem-Solving

Circle Structure



Circle Rules

- “Circle Rules” are used to provide an indication of behavior management within the circle.
- *Comprised of:* Clear circle rules, Fairness and consistency, and Response to rule breaking

Circle Support

Support



Positive teacher-
student and
student-student
interactions

Teacher and **student**
responsiveness

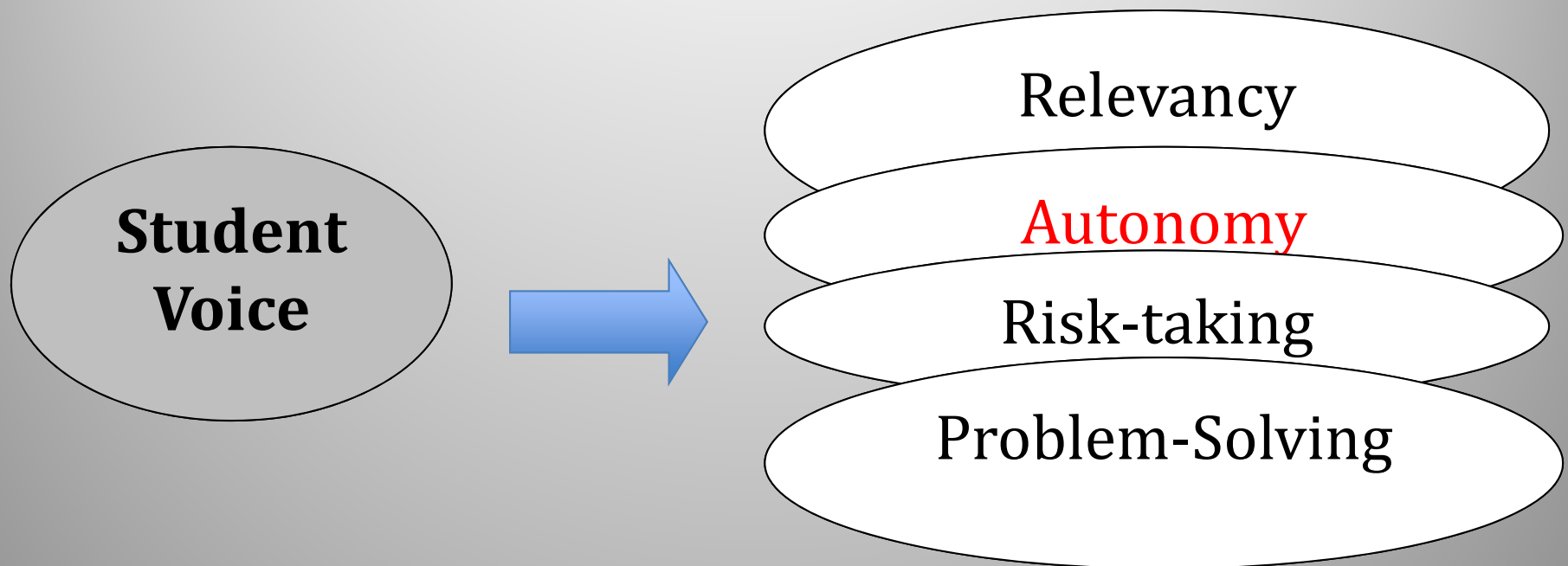
Student Responsiveness

- Student responsiveness used to provide a measure of empathic and accepting behavior amongst students.
- Comprised of: Empathic responses and Acceptance

Student Responsiveness Example

- Rating = 4 (mid-range)
- Few empathic responses observed
- Students generally take turns and listen to one another
- Students display some interest in other students
- Students engage in polite exchanges

Student Voice



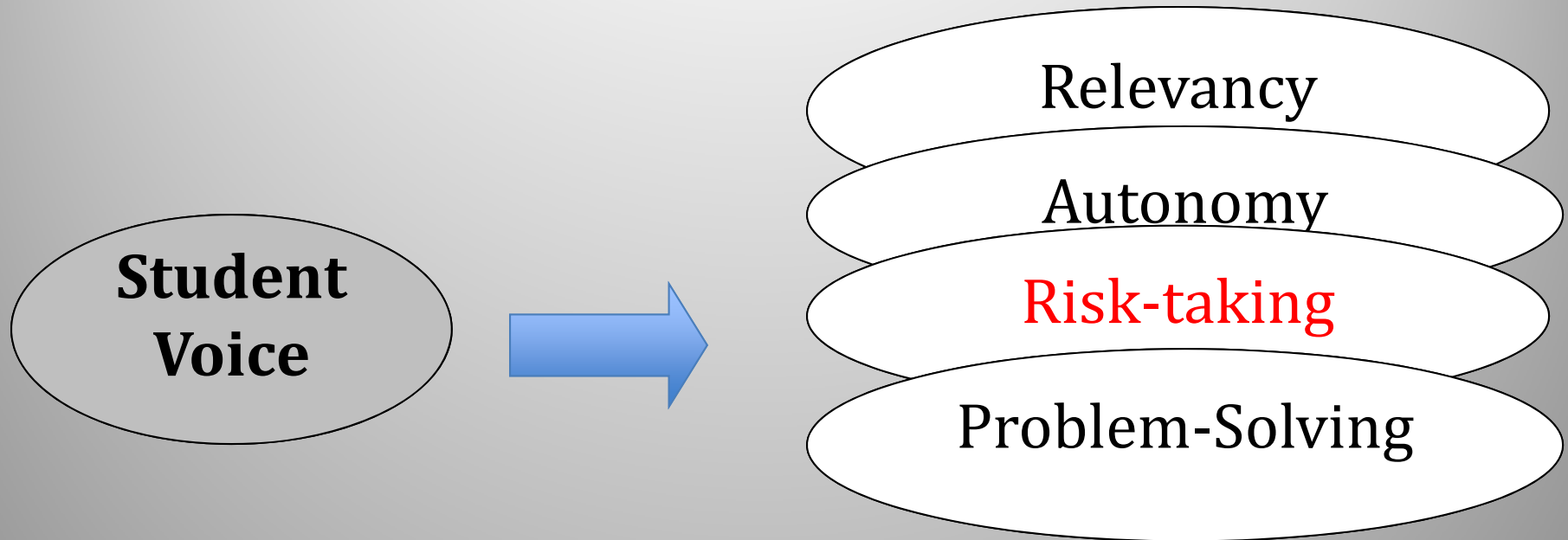
Autonomy

- Autonomy measures the degree to which students have ownership in the circle process
- Comprised of: Student ownership of the process, Teacher use of power, and Authentic choice

Autonomy Example

- Rating = 2 (low range)
- Teacher chooses circle topic independently of students
- Rigid circle agenda
- Rigid circle rules
- Teacher leads process completely

Student Voice



Risk-taking

- Risk-taking measures the level of student disclosure present during the circle process
- Comprised of: Appropriate personal disclosure

Risk-taking Example

- Rating = 5 (high end of mid range)
- A single student discloses personal information that may be sensitive in nature
- Other students disclose low risk content (e.g. academic goals)
- Teacher asks questions about student opinions

Technical Notes for RP-Observe

- Initial testing of reliability and validity
 - 15 video segments, 10-20 minute duration
- Most dimensions show adequate inter-rater reliability and validity
 - Autonomy and Student Responsiveness (exceptions)
- Additional testing is required with a larger sample of RP circles.

Concluding Statements

- Initial promise of RP-Observe in reliable and systematic measurement of RP circle quality
- More research needed to strengthen and further adapt RP-Observe
 - Pilot for training purposes

Thank you

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