

**The University of Maryland School of Social Work
Social Work Community Outreach Service (SWCOS)**

The Positive Schools Center

July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022

Program Overview

The Positive Schools Center (PSC) is a PreK-12 school-based services program within the Social Work Community Outreach Service (SWCOS) at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. The mission of the PSC is to partner with school leaders and staff to build restorative and supportive schools. We shift school climates by providing training, staff and leadership coaching, direct community supports, and technical assistance. PSC's work of school transformation is rooted in a strong commitment to racial justice and equity. Collaborating with the school teams, the PSC approaches school culture change by embedding restorative and healing approaches; trauma-responsive educational practices; and social and emotional learning to amplify student, family, and community voices.

During the 2021-2022 school year, the PSC supported 30 Baltimore City Public Schools. The PSC provided regular training and coaching for about 900 teachers and staff, who were responsible for educating more than 8,200 students. That is about 10% of all Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools). During the grant cycle, the PSC provided 224 training or coaching sessions, lasting 300 hours, for 2,100 educators.

During 2021-2022, the PSC provided intensive, individualized training, coaching, and technical assistance for schools and educators. The following are key accomplishments during the grant period:

- 81% percent of school partners participated in at least five coaching sessions. 63% participated in six sessions, and 20% in more than six coaching sessions.
- 91% of our schools are implementing proactive circles on a regular basis. 56% are using proactive circles daily. All partner schools use restorative circles with students at least occasionally.
- 100% of partner schools use restorative circles with staff. Half are using them at least monthly.
- 100% of our partner schools have implemented some form of restorative alternatives to punitive discipline, including:
 - 73% of schools are using restorative circles following events, conflicts, or community events
 - 82% of schools have restorative conferences to resolve significant community conflicts
 - More than half of staff and students use Affective or Virtues language regularly
- 75% of schools have participated in a circle or school culture observation, and 89% of schools have found them helpful, and two-thirds found them very helpful.

- 73% of school leaders stated that they had made their work to address equity and bias in their school community a major focus and taken tangible action this year.
- 95% of school staff agreed that PSC training or coaching encouraged them to examine their thinking and practices, and 68% strongly agreed.
- 80% of school staff have taken steps to address their own bias and equity issues present in their school. 35% have made it a major focus.
- Two-thirds of partner schools saw their average attendance improve when compared to SY20-21, by an average of 3%.
- Two-thirds of partner school decrease in their suspension rate when compared to SY18-19. Two schools ended the school year with zero suspensions.

Intensive Climate Cohort Schools

The PSC supported 18 City Schools for the entirety of the grant period, plus an additional 12 schools for parts of the school year. Partner schools were located throughout the city, although the majority were in central or western Baltimore. The PSC provided coaching and training for school leaders, teachers, and staff to build positive school cultures and reduce the use of harsh discipline practices:

18 Baltimore City Public Schools PSC Partner Schools:

- Augusta Fells Savage Institute of Visual Arts +
- The Belair-Edison School - Brehms Campus
- The Belair-Edison School - Brendan Campus
- Booker T. Washington Middle School ^{PH}
- Calvin M. Rodwell Elementary/Middle School
- George Washington Elementary School +
- Glenmount Elementary/Middle School
- Gwynns Falls Elementary School
- Harlem Park Elementary/Middle School ^{PH}
- Johnston Square Elementary School
- Joseph C. Briscoe Academy +
- Matthew A. Henson Elementary School +
- Renaissance Academy ^{PH}
- Roland Park Elementary/Middle School
- Tunbridge Public Charter School
- Westport Academy +
- Wildwood Elementary/Middle School +
- Wolfe Street Academy

The following 3 schools were added to the SY21-22 cohort, and will continue into SY22-23:

- Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School
- Furman L. Templeton Preparatory Academy ^{PH}

- The Historic Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Elementary School ⁺

The PSC has also partnered with the following 4 schools:

- Barclay Elementary/Middle School
- Carver Vocational-Technical High School
- Eager Street Academy
- Holabird Academy

The following schools, following leadership transitions or concerns about their time and capacity limitations, elected to leave the cohort: Cross Country Elementary/Middle School, Hamilton Elementary/Middle School, Leith Walk Elementary/Middle School, Moravia Park Elementary School, and Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women.

Program Outputs and Outcomes

Outcome 1:

The PSC provided coaching, training, and support to school leaders to shift mindsets and implement strategies.

- ***80% of school leaders will participate in at least six coaching sessions.***
81% percent of school partners participated in at least five coaching sessions, with 63% of schools participating in six sessions. 20% of school partners participated in more than six coaching sessions. Most sessions missed by school leaders were in the last quarter of the school year and speak to the collective burnout that the district is experiencing. Of the six school leaders who did not participate in the remaining sessions, two of those principals left the school during or after the end of the school year, and one was serving as the principal of two schools simultaneously. The PSC has met with each of these schools, one of whom decided to partner with another lead community schools agency, and the other elected to focus on a smaller part of their school population (early elementary) to make the PSC partnership more effective. Over the last calendar year, the PSC has provided 94 leader coaching sessions.

In August 2021, the PSC met with every partner principal, focusing on supporting students, staff, and families as they returned to school buildings after 18 months of virtual and hybrid learning. This planning established a strong foundation for the exceptionally challenging first six months of SY21-22. Relationships are fundamental to the PSC’s approach. Because of the relationships built over time with principals and other key staff, they feel comfortable reaching out by phone, text, or email to collaborate, modify plans, and discuss challenges as they arise.

For much of this year, especially for periods in October, December, and January, there was severe leader burnout. While for many, coaching was a useful strategy they used to

^{+/PH} The PSC and Promise Heights is the Lead Agency for Community Schools for 13 schools. In these schools, the PSC employs a community school coordinator, who is a full-time licensed social worker responsible for engaging communities and building support systems for students, families, staff, and the community.

care for themselves and their staff, for others it was not. 70% of principals responded that coaching sessions helped them to care for themselves and their team this year. The benefit of individual coaching is that it can be tailored to the needs of leaders, whether that is focused on planning and implementing culture strategies for their schools or more internally focused. We will more intentionally track the priorities within these sessions to identify trends to make sure that we are effectively meeting the needs of leaders and teams.

- ***80% of school teams will participate in at least six training or technical assistance sessions.***

Partner schools participated in an average of six training or technical support sessions. Six schools participated in monthly activities and, several schools participated bi-weekly. 57% of the school teams have participated in at least six training and technical assistance sessions this calendar year. The PSC has provided 93 training, technical assistance, and climate walk sessions this school year. The sessions are divided equally between these three categories.

Of four schools that did not meet the annual goal by a substantial amount, two principals left the school, and the PSC is waiting for the next school leader to be named to determine the next steps. The remaining two have scheduled multiple sessions or activities that have had to be canceled because of repeated emergencies in their community. The PSC maintains a strong relationship with both school leaders. Both identify coaching sessions as “exceptionally helpful”, suggesting that the leader coaching rather than whole-school support is what is most useful to them currently.

The PSC has worked more directly this year with staff and mid-level leadership than in previous years. We are adjusting our programming strategy for the 2022-2023 school year based on these trends. This year’s PSC Institute will primarily focus on climate and culture teams, and we are encouraging school teams to schedule monthly coaching and check-in meetings for the PSC with members of their team most directly supporting school climate, behavioral interventions, and responsive restorative strategies in schools.

The same factors of burnout and challenging school climates that caused this year’s coaching sessions to decrease slightly compared to previous years have caused requests for training and technical assistance to increase. Principals and staff have requested strategies to address challenges and focus on relationships. This year there have been significant and continual changes to the district’s professional development schedule to promote staff self-care. Through flexibility and relationships, we have been successful in meeting school needs.

- ***PSC coaching supports will positively shift school leaders’ mindset and result in the implementation of changes to school policies, procedures, and approaches, as demonstrated in quarterly data surveys, analysis of coaching notes, and positive changes in school documents, policies, and procedures.***

When school leaders reflected on their work to address equity and bias in their school community, 73% of school leaders stated that they had made it a focus and taken tangible action this year. Some of the impacts of these mindset shifts include fewer suspensions, rethinking their outreach and hiring practices for new staff, greater awareness and frequent discussion of how racial equity is impacted by school procedures, the implementation of restorative conferences and circles, focusing on and improving staff wellness, an increased understanding of how policy and bias impact disproportionality, and the creation of student and staff affinity groups, and generally improved relationships with students, families, and teachers.

Outcome 2:

The PSC's supported school leaders in implementing strategies that created restorative, trauma-responsive, socially and emotionally developed, and racially equitable spaces.

- ***At least 80% of active PSC schools will implement proactive circles at least weekly, as evidenced by the circle observation tool and school reporting.***

91% of our schools are implementing proactive circles on a regular basis, and 56% are using proactive circles every day. All of our partner schools use restorative circles with students at least occasionally. 100% of partner schools are using restorative circles with staff, and half are using them at least monthly.

The PSC dedicated significant energy to developing and continually improving a circle observation tool, including a written feedback summary, follow-up coaching, and training materials. The PSC has provided 27 school walks this year. 75% of schools have participated in a circle or school culture observation, 89% of schools have found them helpful, and two-thirds found them very helpful. One team lead at Tunbridge Public Charter School, which is in its first year of implementation, noted: "Thank you for your presence and support last week. My teachers enjoyed the recognition cards and felt reassured that they were on the right path". Another school leader at Augusta Fells Savage Institute for Visual Arts stated "the feedback was so clear, outlining our strengths and areas where we need to grow. The way you ask questions helps us to decide what to focus on first and prioritize".

The PSC supports a variety of strategies with schools. Over the last five years, we have more strongly encouraged schools to begin with restorative approaches as their foundation for their school climate work. The uncertainty around returning to school fully in person, and City School's new and sometimes unclear guidance around advisory and morning meetings that was released in August 2021, caused a few principals to not include daily circles in the master schedule. As we enter SY22-23, we will strongly encourage principals to include circles in their master schedule and provide support on how best to do this. We will also be able to better support using restorative approaches to meet district expectations.

- ***At least 70% of active PSC schools will utilize restorative alternatives to punitive discipline practices, as evidenced by the self-report and qualitative analysis of principals' self-reports*.***

100% of our partner schools have implemented restorative alternatives to punitive discipline, including:

- 73% of schools are using restorative circles following events, conflicts, or community events
- 82% of schools have restorative conferences to resolve significant community conflicts
- More than half of staff and students use Affective or Virtues language regularly

Principals have repeatedly indicated that they have a greater need for restorative alternatives as opposed to traditional discipline practices compared to pre-pandemic. In coaching and technical assistance sessions, principals have described and worked through this year's unique school culture and climate challenges. Some of these challenges include poor staff morale, staffing shortages, challenging student behaviors, and the unprecedented social and emotional needs of students, families, and even staff. Over the year, especially during the exceptionally challenging periods in October, December, and January, and then again in May and June, the PSC had a high number of requests for support specifically focusing on restorative strategies to respond to conflicts of all types and promoting the self-care and self-awareness of staff. In May and June, the PSC was asked to partner with City Schools and provide these resources to general educators and district staff.

- ***Daily circles at active PSC schools will improve in quality and fidelity to the Restorative Practice model by at least 10% from Fall 2021 to Spring 2022, as evidenced by the data collected through the circles/community meetings observation tool.***

Five partner schools have completed at least two circle walks so far this year. Tunbridge Public Charter School, which is in its first year of implementation, has seen 25% growth in the quality of its circles due to strong leadership buy-in and regular coaching support. The remaining four schools have met the overall 10% goal, growing by at least 20% in at least three of the nine categories assessed by the tool. Across the cohort of schools, we have observed that transitioning into and out of circles, staff use of strategies for students who are resistant or avoidant, student engagement, and the use of engaging and relevant questions have been both the greatest areas of growth and are currently their greatest strengths. As students and staff work to rebuild connections, these elements of restorative circles are essential.

The number of requests for circle and school culture observations has continued to grow throughout the year. One unanticipated challenge to collecting this data as described is that about a third of our schools have opted to focus on broader school culture feedback, rather than the circle observations. The school culture walk is a newly revised tool first offered to schools in late 2021. We are looking forward to comparing the beginning and end of the year data using the Culture Walk tool in SY22-23.

- ***School leaders and staff at active PSC schools will be able to identify concrete steps they have taken to create more equitable and restorative school communities, as evidenced by survey feedback administered to school leaders quarterly, and school staff after every training.***

80% of school staff at partner schools have taken steps to address their own bias and equity issues present in their school. 35% of staff have made it a major focus. When analyzing teacher responses, focusing on developing relationships, growing in the implementation of restorative circles, and working to better understand the theories behind restorative approaches were overwhelmingly the most common themes. Focusing on better understanding individual and community trauma was also common. Some of the steps and commitments identified by school staff include:

- Listening, asking questions, and allowing others to respond without my input.
- Being self-aware and being able to use the social discipline window to reflect on my relationships (TO, FOR, NOT, WITH).
- Focusing on circles to help build trust.
- Using restorative practice all the time, not only when something challenging or negative happens. I need to participate; it will help build relationships.
- Assuming a broader perspective on harm, it can be looked at in a small or big way.
- I keep reflecting on how my own adverse experiences can lead me to drift away from working WITH students.
- I let students be heard, have a voice, and be part of decision-making.
- I have learned that it is ok to make mistakes and go into the TO box. The key is to be aware that you went there and to apologize to those who were affected by it.
- I listen more.

Restorative practitioners and school experts have found that it takes three to five years to change a school’s culture (OSI, 2020). Considering the challenges schools faced during pandemic closures and as they return to buildings, this timeline will be extended. The first step, however, is a mindset change for the adults working with students, that begins with self-awareness. The PSC was meeting with a veteran teacher and high-school department chair following an Instructional Leadership Team meeting. She shared: “I read the book about trauma. It said that you should allow students to eat if they are hungry. I don’t play as a teacher but am letting them sneak a snack. It is making a difference.”



Outcome 3:

The PSC provided coaching, training, and support for school leaders to implement strategies that shifted school culture and positively impacted student and school outcomes.

- ***At least 80% of active PSC schools will achieve an attendance rate that is better than the average attendance for comparable schools in the district for the same period, as evidenced by school and district reporting.***

Note: Obtaining comparable school data has been a challenge. The PSC has chosen to compare this year's attendance to the partial data from SY19-20 (through March 2020), as well as the SY20-21 data (for which most of the school year was virtual).

When compared to their student attendance rate for the virtual SY20-21, two-thirds of partner schools saw their average attendance improve. Across the cohort, schools saw their attendance rates improve by an average of 3%. Both of our partner high schools saw their attendance rates grow by 11%. Virtual learning environments were particularly challenging for high school students, especially at our partner schools where many students work. All our partner schools have made student re-engagement and relationships a major focus that the PSC has been deeply involved.

When the current year is compared to SY19-20, all but three schools saw a drop in attendance. The average drop was about 6%. The pandemic and related school closures have had a profound impact on student attendance, the full impact of which will likely be fully assessed for several years. It is a significant achievement for partner schools that student attendance numbers have grown significantly since last year. This growth is partially due to the strong focus on relationship building and connection, of which restorative approaches have been the primary strategy for most of our schools.

Before the pandemic, major restorative approaches studies have not found a definitive connection between the implementation of restorative approaches and student attendance (OSI, 2020; Augustine et al., 2018). It will be interesting to see if the attendance data from PSC partner schools and other restorative approaches schools nationally is consistent with these pre-pandemic findings.

- ***At least 85% of active PSC schools will retain at least 90% of teaching staff annually, as evidenced by staff training records and principal reports.***

Only 50% of partner schools retained at least 90% of their staff going into the current school year. We had hoped that this significant loss in staff as teachers and staff transitioned back into the school building full time would be the end of the trend of educators leaving the district. Unfortunately, burnout and fatigue for staff have been major issues. School leaders have requested support to address staff needs but have also shared that they continue to have staff leave mid-year. A supportive and engaged school culture is crucial to retaining teachers (Ryan, 2020; Tait, 2008; Yost, 2006). As we have begun to plan with school leaders for SY22-23, most schools are having another significant loss of teachers and staff, even at schools that typically have staff retention

rates above 95%. While some of these staff decisions may be a reflection of their school leadership and culture, most can likely be attributed to more national or global trends.

- ***50% of schools in the active PSC schools will decrease suspension rates, as evidenced by Baltimore City Public School System records for SY18/19 – SY20/21.***

66% of our partner schools are on track to report a decrease in their suspension rate when compared to SY18-19. Three of our schools have had zero suspensions at the end of the 1st semester, and two schools ended the year with zero suspension. Seven schools currently have less than six total suspensions. Several schools have achieved significant decreases (going from 74, 57, 25, 21, 5 suspensions in SY18-19, to 43, 15, 10, 0, and 0 suspensions so far this year, respectively). Three schools who had made restorative approaches a major priority, made at least a 25% decrease between the 1st and 2nd semester and a result of their interventions. All these schools have made reducing their dependence on harsh and punitive discipline practices in favor of more restorative approaches a major focus and have made restorative approaches one of their main priorities for the SY21-22 school year. We look forward to comparing this data to the district's data when it is released.

Intensive Climate Cohort Trainings and Coaching

The PSC is continuously working to improve our processes and make it easier for school leaders and staff to partner. Eighty-two percent of school leaders reported that it was easy to schedule and participate in PSC support, and more than a third strongly agreed. The updated *Intensive Climate Cohort Collaboration Cycle* (attached) depicts PSC programming and strategies implemented through an Implementation Science PDSA model.

The first two steps of the Collaboration Cycle remain largely unchanged. Over the last two years, the PSC has dedicated time to developing and revising our circle and culture walk tools, as well as how we administer them and provide feedback to school leaders. This increased focus on qualitative and quantitative data that can be quickly shared with school partners has allowed us to provide more responsive and actionable professional development for staff, as well as work in a more focused manner with school leadership, climate/culture staff, and specific sub-groupings of staff members.

The other major shift has been our creation of tools to help staff, administrators, and in some cases, students implement restorative strategies in their schools. The PSC has provided monthly circle prompts aligned with the season of the year, social-emotional learning competencies, and celebrations of identity, culture, and race. We have also made a wide range of resources available to school partners and the public including implementation guides, graphic organizers describing key restorative principles, and self-assessment and evaluation tools.

Current School Activities

The implementation of Restorative Practices progresses at various rates and with different focuses based on the needs and past experiences of each staff, school leader, and community. Below are narratives highlighting some of the strategies, interventions, and successes taking place in our schools this past year:

- **Glenmount Elementary/Middle School**

This was Glenmount's first year partnering with the PSC, and initially, the school was largely unengaged. Right before winter break, in response to a steep rise in suspensions and behavioral challenges, the middle school climate team began meeting bi-weekly with a PSC coach. The middle school has daily proactive circles in every homeroom. During the first circle visit at the beginning of December, circles were inconsistent, and many students were disengaged. The beginning of the day was unstructured, and students roamed the halls. By the end of the school year, circles were observed in almost every classroom, and transitions were quick and purposeful. Teachers who were struggling to connect and engage with students in December were taking part in a shared circle. Early-career or transitioning staff working as hall monitors and climate staff has developed professionally, receiving a basic understanding of restorative approaches, learning how to support proactive circles and relationship building, and creating a framework to begin to intervene in the conflict in a more restorative fashion. As the semester progressed leadership began to dedicate protected time for the bi-weekly coaching sessions. When debriefing the year's progress in circle, staff and leadership shared that "we really needed this". Through Virtues Language and being in circle they learned more about each other. While suspensions for the year are still up relative to SY19-20 (although this could be because it only reflects suspensions through March 2020), the team decreased their suspensions from the first semester to the second semester by 25%, reversing their standard trend.

- **Matthew A. Henson Elementary School**

This was the PSC's second year partnering with Matthew A. Henson, and their first year fully implementing restorative circles in person. Many of their staff had been trained at previous schools, but as they transitioned as a team back into the building, they struggled to implement the practices in a meaningful way. Through several series of circle walks visiting with every teacher and classroom in the building, the PSC and school leadership were able to identify specific staff who needed additional support in using circles and building relationships. As a whole staff, they demonstrated more active listening and were more self-aware during circles, leading to the development of relationships. In the targeted group of staff who participated in focused coaching, during coaching they expressed that they had felt unsupported and unconnected from the rest of the school. This team connected to restorative approaches and circles as a means for staff to connect to other adults and create stability in their workplace. Restorative approaches are a pathway for this team to begin to build relationships not only with students but also with adults.

- **The Belair-Edison School (BE)- Brendan Campus**

The PSC has been partnering with BE-Brendan for three years. The full staff has been trained in restorative approaches, proactive circles happen twice daily as part of the master schedule, and their behavior policies and procedures are non-punitive. During multiple school circles and culture walks, students were observed leading proactive daily circles, initiating responsive circles with the support of school staff, and using restorative strategies to independently deescalate conflict. As BE-Brendan works to sustain the work, the PSC has transitioned to providing training for new staff each year, providing

periodic coaching for restorative team leads, and providing outside perspective and best practices through circle walks. The PSC began working with BE-Brendan's other campus, BE-Brehms, last year and the other school in their charter network, Tunbridge Public Charter School, this year. The PSC has been able to work with all three administrative teams to implement restorative approaches and fully integrate them into the fabric of their charter network.

This winter, an administrator shared a story about how restorative approaches had impacted their school community: "One of my students came to morning circle. She shared that she found out the night before her dad had passed. I spoke to her afterward and she said that she wasn't sure if she was going to stay all day, but she wanted to at least come in for the circle because she wanted to tell us. She knew we would ask how she was doing and if anything had happened recently. She also said that she was glad we had a circle because she didn't know how she would tell people otherwise. It felt odd just to say in math class, 'last night, I found out my dad died,' but she knew she could comfortably do it in an advisory. It also made me think about how often kids come to school with big things that happen and we might not know, but that at least they have a place to share it."

Lessons Learned

Just as partner schools are constantly shifting to meet the needs of their students and families and the direction set by City Schools, the PSC is constantly adapting our strategies to best meet the needs of our partner schools. Some of our biggest shifts this year have been to focus on shorter, more flexible professional development modules that can quickly be modified to address the themes and areas of growth we observe during school visits and in the feedback we receive from school leaders and staff. Another focus has been continually developing new tools and implementation supports, such as the monthly circle questions and circle self-evaluation rubric. These tools are our most frequently requested items by school staff and are frequently in feedback and evaluations from school staff. Finally, based on our experience with school climate and culture teams this year, we will be focusing more explicitly on this cohort next year. We are currently seeking the feedback of partner principals on what these sessions and coaching should include.

The pivot to virtual training environments and then the slow return to in-person professional development environments in August 2022 had been a challenge for many organizations that consult or provide training for schools. The PSC since its inception has built our reputation on engaging, practical support that has been tailored to the circumstances and dynamics of the individual school community. At the beginning of the pandemic, we invested a lot of time and research in modifying our training offerings and coaching strategies so that they would be compelling and accessible in the virtual setting. Because of this investment we are now able to easily meet the needs of a variety of schools, staff, and schedules whether it be in-person, virtual, or asynchronous in a way that continues to feel authentic, engaging, and relevant. We would recommend the intentional sharing of best practices with other organizations and City Schools about when virtual, in-person, and hybrid practices are most effective, and how to maximize the strengths of each.

Other Areas of Work

Community Schools

Community Schools had continued to be the PSC's greatest area of growth. Since August 2021, the PSC's staff has grown substantially to include more than 40 people with the incorporation of the University of Maryland School of Social Work's Promise Heights program. This provides more intimate connections with five additional school communities in the form of Community Schools staff, attendance support, parent leaders, and college and career staff. This has created new opportunities to collaborate with school teams around their culture and climate priorities. Promise Heights also provides the opportunity to expand the PSC's culture and climate work to more directly address early risk factors for the School-to-Prison Pipeline including integrating the PSC's framework into Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, literacy interventions, a focus on early childhood strategies, and college and career supports. It has also increased our capacity to engage family and community voices, in the form of paid parent liaisons. The PSC is looking forward to continuing to grow and provide more comprehensive support through these new resources. Community Schools are annotated on the list of PSC partner schools at the beginning of the report.

Conferences and Contracted Partnerships

Beyond schools and staff members, the PSC continues to work closely with multiple City Schools departments, including the Office of the Whole Child Services and Support, the Special Education Department, the Office of Equity, as well as individual Instructional Leadership Executive Directors (ILEDs) who supervise school leaders. At the end of SY21-22, the PSC provides professional development sessions for general educators during district-wide PD, as well as additional sessions for Health and Safety Coordinators, school Wholeness Specialists, and Food and Nutrition staff.

Outside of City Schools, the PSC continues to collaborate with other educational non-profits through contracted training or joint efforts. Some partners include the Family League of Baltimore, Holistic Life Foundation, Project Pneuma, Restorative Response Baltimore, Teachers Democracy Project (TDP), and The Y of Central Maryland.

The PSC has presented or helped plan multiple conferences including the Maryland Cultural Proficiency Conference, Mid-Atlantic Anti-Oppression Social Work Coalition Conference, Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC)'s Family Engagement Conference, and the Baltimore Trauma Summit. During the national Community Schools and Family Engagement Conference, the PSC had two sessions accepted, one focusing on Holistic Healing Communities, and the other on Restorative Approaches.

Baltimore School Climate Collaborative

The PSC's director, Shantay McKinily, has completed her third full year as chair of the Baltimore School Climate Collaborative (BSCC), a gathering of the education and educational policy community in Baltimore. The PSC has increased attendance and improved communication among Baltimore's educational community. The BSCC includes about 200 individuals representing more than 60 organizations throughout Baltimore. Virtual participation has continued to grow over the current school year to regularly include about 40 participants,

with 25 individuals participating through the Facebook Livestream, and 60 participating monthly through the resource newsletter. Tiffany Majors, the president and CEO of the Greater Baltimore Urban League and regular BSCC attendee shared, that the BSCC is “an excellent wealth of information for our communities! THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, for such a rich collaborative!”

Developing Relationships and Community Among Education Advocates

The Coalition to Reform School Discipline (CRSD) is a long-standing group of advocates in Baltimore that advocates for less punitive and discriminatory educational discipline practices at a state and district level. Legislative agendas and policy priorities have been severely curtailed as school leaders and elected officials respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure the passage of The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. In combination with shifting staffing for educational non-profits, attendance and engagement in CRSD had declined. Beginning in May 2022, the PSC became the chair of this group to re-engage members, diversify our representation, build capacity, and develop deep internal leadership.