



# *Building a Restorative Space in Your Educational Community*

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ROBERT F.  
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Restorative Justice Project

***Put it in the chat box!***

***When have you noticed you are most likely to be punitive?***



***When are you most likely to be restorative?***

***What's for dinner tonight?***



## ***Cymone Fuller***

Co-Director, Restorative Justice Project  
[cfuller@impactjustice.org](mailto:cfuller@impactjustice.org)

## ***Sia Henry***

Senior Program Specialist, Restorative Justice Project  
[shenry@impactjustice.org](mailto:shenry@impactjustice.org)

## ***Reuben Roberts***

Restorative Justice Schools Coordinator, Restorative  
Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY)  
[reuben@rjoyoakland.org](mailto:reuben@rjoyoakland.org)

# *Learning Objectives*

- Understand the present harms of US educational spaces
- Recognize the benefits of restorative justice in communities and schools compared to punitive approaches
- Begin to think about restorative practices you can implement in your communities and schools



# *What Do Students of Color Need?*



# *Comments in Chat*

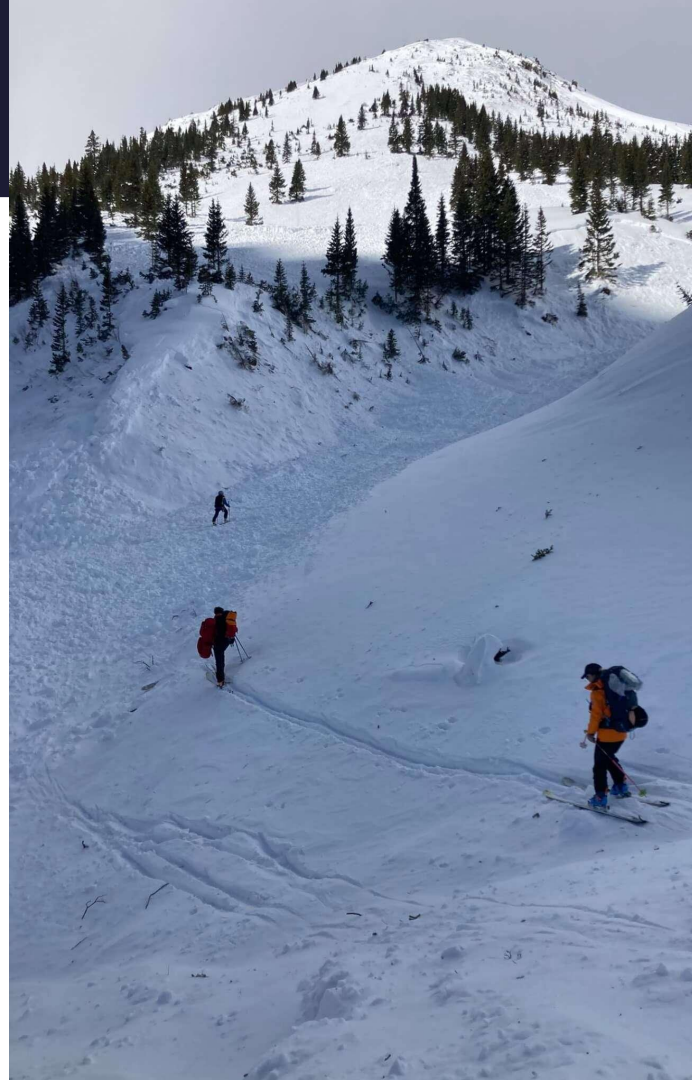


*What came up for you in  
watching that video?*

# *U.S. Schools Tend to Be Harmful*

- **Low expectations and devaluation of BIPOC students**
- “Doing well in school requires a belief that school achievement can be a **promising basis of self-esteem**, and that belief needs **constant reaffirmation** . . . [But Black students] risk **devaluation** for a particular incompetence . . . [and] further risk that such performances will confirm the broader, racial **inferiority they are suspected of** . . . The crisis in Black Americans' education stems from the power of this vulnerability to undercut identification with schooling, either before it happens or after it has bloomed.”

- *Claude Steele (1992)*



# *U.S. Schools Tend to Be Harmful (continued . . .)*

- Teaching and enforcing white normative values
  - White-washed curriculum
    - Removing ethnic studies, critical race theory, and similar curricula from schools → erasing certain youth from the classroom
  - Holding students to white dress and communication standards
  - Lack of cultural competence and culturally responsive, social and emotional learning and teaching
- Unmet needs outside of school and no space to understand or share that in school





# *School-to-Prison Pipeline*

“Youth facing hardships need an outlet to speak out, but their schools promote **silence** and **conformity**, backed by **punitive force.**”

- Michelle Chen



*Let's pause . . .*



# *10-minute Small Group Discussions*



*What's coming up for folks?*

# Layers to Restorative Justice



- Building community is the foundation (takes time)
- Then create space to address harm
- Then move toward reparative agreements and healing



# *RJ in Schools: Critical Elements*

- **Strengths-based approach and affirmation of identities**
- **Shared agreements**
- **Culturally sustaining pedagogy**
- **Social and emotional learning and teaching**
- **Mindfulness**

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# *Bringing Restorative Justice to Schools*

- RJ is **not just a position**
- Practiced at all levels, **adults first**
- **Relationship building** through community circles
- Creating a **culture of restorative justice** (long before harm ever occurs)
  - Teachers can't outsource addressing harm and conflict, need to teach the whole child
- **THEN space for conflict/harm circles**

# *Benefits of Restorative Justice*

- Begin to identify **root causes** of trauma and harm
- Developing transferable **communication skills** rooted in respect, equality, and human dignity
- **Reduced criminalization** of BIPOC
- Deeper feelings of **healing and connectedness**
- **Safer** communities
- **Reflection and self awareness** (including teachers understanding harm they may be causing)

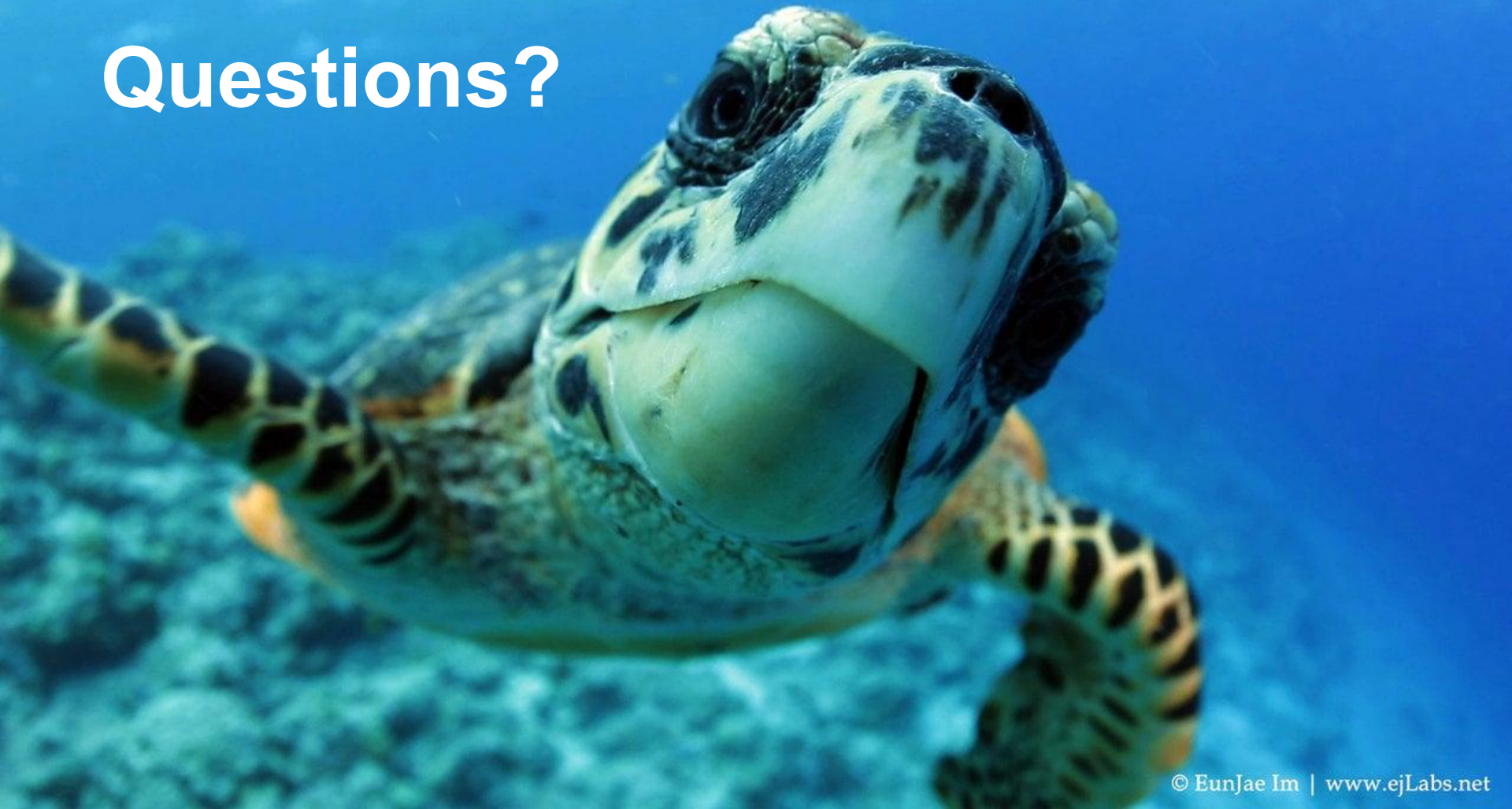
***Think to the beginning of the new school year...***



***What would it look like to set a classroom agreement that your class will not push anyone out?***



# Questions?



The background of the slide features a vibrant aurora borealis in shades of green and blue, dancing across a dark night sky. Below the sky, a snowy mountain landscape is visible, with a bright campfire burning in the foreground. Several people are gathered around the fire, and a dog is also present. The overall scene is serene and evokes a sense of nature and community.

## *Homeplay!*

**What are potential ways you can incorporate restorative justice practices into your own classroom / school / other spaces?**

**What obstacles do you anticipate encountering?**

**Thank you!**

**We'll see you during our final Session on  
August 3rd**

**And please join RFK Human Rights  
for our Science, Language Arts,  
and Social Studies Workshops**

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