Five Moral Issues

1. Faith - imparting the importance of faith in all aspects of our daily lives will be a central focus of my teaching.
2. Forgiveness - becoming friends after fighting
3. Stealing from school/ students/ staff/ community
4. Service - Investment in our local community as a form of investing in ourselves.
5. Work - The honor of working hard as its own reward. Not taking the easy way out through cheating.

Moral Issue

Forgiveness - Breaking down emotional barriers when addressing the needs of two students who have been fighting based around cultural disagreements.

Division

Secondary

See, Judge, Act, Evaluate

| See | The first step in understanding this incident is to find out what happened. I will interview the parties involved along with any witnesses. During these interviews, I will take notes of the details. These will include preceding events, people involved in the events leading up to the incident and after, collect any evidence (emails, text messages, facebook posts, etc). I will want to assess if there are any lingering problems still be to resolved from the dispute. |
| Judge | Following the data collection stage, it is important to consider all of the factors that have been involved in the lead up to the fight. Were there students involved in the situation but not in the fight? Where will these students come together again in the building? Are there any larger issues at work in this situation (gangs, drugs, other students, race)? As I consider these factors it is important to evaluate the style of action that will be necessary for the next stage of the dispute resolution process. The process should seek to alleviate the lingering issues between the parties involved and provide a proactive approach to solving any future issues. |
The most likely dispute resolution model I seek to employ in these types of situations is Restorative Justice. I want to invest in these students while ensuring they grow as individuals. Below is a listing of the steps typically used:

The use of Restorative Justice at Ontario S.S. would contribute to fostering a school community and bridging the divide between cultures for young Canadians. Often the differences in cultures can lead to misunderstandings as students assimilate to the new Canadian standards within our culture. Students can come to the school with poor impressions of authority in schools from their previous experiences. (Zellerer, 2003) Allowing students to participate within the RJ process allows them to learn what acceptable behaviours are within a Canadian school while at the same time allowing them to make amends to victims of their actions. These students can then reintegrate into the school community and share their experiences with fellow students.

Difficulties would be expected from both parents and educators alike as they adapt to this style of discipline (Bargen, 2003). However with school wide education for students, PD for teachers and administrators, the implementation of the system can be achieved over a number of years. Students will need to know that after the RJ system the standard school board policies will still apply.

The main intent behind implementing this system would be to 1. Increase the overall sense of community within the school both with students and parents. 2. Increasing the social skills of the students entering into the processes. 3. Teach students the importance and power of communication in resolving disputes. The overall implementation of a RJ program in a school community similar to our case study would be an effective approach to managing school discipline while increasing the overall school atmosphere.

After the RJ meeting between the students, I will want to follow up on their feelings following the implementation of the discipline process. Often with a fight this can be a suspension from school. I would want to interview them before their first period class. During this post interview I am looking to evaluate if there was any subsequent interactions, lingering problems and most importantly the results of the self reflection process the students engaged in.
Current Curriculum

The current curriculum document that would be most applicable in this situation would deal with Character Education Initiative and the Safe Schools Act. The Safe Schools Act outlines the need for discipline procedures to follow a model of Progressive Discipline. The premise behind the Character Education Initiative is to “addresses the whole student as an individual, as a learner and as an engaged citizen...” (Character Development, 2013).

Future Curriculum Needs

The role of Restorative Justice is growing within Ontario Schools. The lack of implementation thus far is simply due to the lack of Professional Development provided to administrators and staff. Moving forward, RJ should be a component of the Progressive Discipline approach as it teaches students to develop understanding and compassion for other people and the victims of their actions.

Bibliography


