Dear Families,

SAVE THE DATE!
Friday, March 6 Lawrence Learner’s Showcase

We are so proud of our students and the high level of thinking that each of them have demonstrated throughout the year. This spring, our students will create academic presentations and/or projects to show our families and communities. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend the Learner’s Showcase beginning at 8:00 on March 6. Students will share their learning from 8:00 - 9:00 and families are welcome to check out all grade level projects and presentations. Third grade students will also be performing a few songs in the gymnasium from 9:15 to 10:00. Please take some time in the morning to checkout our student work to celebrate the high level of engagement and focus our students are demonstrating.

We hope to see you for this incredible opportunity!

Chris
What are Restorative Practices?
Restorative Practices are a group of practices focused on building community and relationships. The belief is that we are all connected and our actions influence one another. The focus is on how to participate in the community in a healthy way that enhances and builds on relationships and how to repair harm when a conflict occurs. It is inclusionary versus exclusionary and teaching rather than punitive.

What does this look like at Lawrence?
There are a variety of practices that communities can engage in ranging from school wide, class wide, group and individual. At Lawrence the current practice is mostly in classrooms through community circles. Sometimes when a conflict occurs between two people, a restorative conversation will occur. This focuses on each person’s part in a conflict, how it affected them, and how to move forward.

What is a community circle or restorative circle?
Community circles, also called restorative circles, have been around for hundreds of years and originated in indigenous communities. Modern day restorative practices developed from restorative justice as an approach in the criminal justice system to focus on repairing harm and restoring community versus strictly punitive approaches. There are many styles of circles but the primary way they are done at Lawrence is by the group literally coming together in a circle and passing a talking piece while discussing a question designed to create connections as a group. Sometimes circles can be reactive, where the group meets to discuss something that caused disruption to the classroom community and a re-connection needs to occur.

What is a restorative conversation?
A restorative conversation usually occurs between two players in a conflict, though it can also happen with a small group. The focus is on the specific conflict that occurred and what each part can do to move forward in a positive way. The facilitator is an adult trained in the discussion questions: What happened? How did this affect those involved? What responsibility does each party have in this? What can we do to move forward? The participants come up with their own solution based on the situation and commit to it with the support of the facilitator. How can I do this at home? Restorative practices can be done anywhere!

There are many resources out there, but why not just start with a circle?
As a family, sit in a circle and start with a question, such as “What do you think is the most important quality in a friend” and take turns sharing. Here are some guidelines for sharing:
Respect the talking piece – Speak from the heart – Listen from the heart – Trust you will know what to say – Say just enough.

### Circle Agreements

- Respect the talking piece.
- Speak from the heart.
- Listen from the heart.
- Trust you will know what to say.
- Say just enough.