Dear Parent/Guardian,

At Francis Scott Key, we believe that it is important for every student to be in school – learning! One thing that keeps students out of school is conflict with their peers. And we know that what keeps students in school is a real sense of connection and relationship with the teachers, staff, and peers in the building.

This year, in an effort to create a thriving school community, we are doing everything possible to support students in having a strong connection with peers and teachers and to prevent conflict before it happens.

As such, we are pleased to share with you two wonderful resources our school will be using: Daily Rap and Community Conferencing.

The Daily Rap is a preventative model that focuses on building positive relationships and cultivating a sense of community through dialogue circles. These circles include conversations about and activities that center on:

- Community Building
- Positive Relationships (Peer-to-Peer and Adult-to-Child)
- Character Development
- Social-Emotional Competence

A Community Conference brings together everyone involved in, and affected by, an incident/conflict in order to:

- Hear what happened from those who were there
- Speak about how everyone has been affected
- Create a written agreement that repairs the harm done and resolves the issue

Common issues addressed by a Community Conference include:

- Gossiping
- Bullying
- Fighting
- Harassment
- Conflicts where parents get involved

Many schools in Baltimore City have adopted the restorative practice of Community Conferencing, and it is included in the Baltimore City Public School’s Student Code of Conduct as an intervention at all levels.

Important things to know if you or your child are invited to a Community Conference:

- It is Voluntary.
- 98% of conferences result in agreements that repair the harm done and resolve the issue.
- If you do not reach agreement, or if the agreement is not followed, students are sent back to Administration who will proceed as usual. You are not out anything.
- Everyone gets a chance to speak and be heard.
- Can be arranged at times that are convenient for you.
Community Conferencing allows you to take part in deciding what should happen to make the situation better. Conferences can be held at the request of the school or at the request of a parent or student. If Francis Scott Key refers your child for Community Conferencing, you will be contacted by a trained Facilitator. Facilitators will coordinate scheduling and prepare everyone for conferences. If you are contacted by a Facilitator and have questions, please contact your student’s administrator.

Thank you for being part of making Francis Scott Key a healthy, safe, and productive learning environment. To learn more about Daily Rap or Community Conferencing, please visit [www.communityconferencing.org](http://www.communityconferencing.org).

Sincerely,

Mary Boswell-McComas
Principal