

Dear Family:

During our first open circle meetings, the class worked together to make a plan to get their chairs into a circle quickly, quietly, safely, and cooperatively. We form a circle so that everyone can see everyone else and be heard. We always leave one space open in case a new person or visitor would like to join the circle. Everyone is welcome, and no one is ever left out. The Open Circle symbolizes the idea of an inclusive classroom community.

As you know, we have discussed our personal goals for fourth grade and developed supportive classroom rules based on those goals. We learned that a goal is something a person tries to get, something to work toward or how you want things to end up. Ask your child to share with you their goals. You might want to talk to your child about your own personal goals and your goals for your family.

Our classroom rules also reflect and are supportive of the Hunnewell CARE values: Community, Acceptance, Respect and Effort Towards Excellence. In addition to these rules, we talked about rules that are **nonnegotiable**. This means "no choice." Students may ask to have these rules explained, and they may ask questions about them, but they cannot be changed. We also talked about situations where rules might need to be changed or new ones added. Ask your child to share with you some of the classroom rules that we developed and agreed to. Ask for an example of a nonnegotiable rule in our classroom. You might have a discussion with your child about the rules in your home – for mealtimes, bedtimes, and chores. Do you have any nonnegotiable rules at home? What are the consequences for breaking the rules at home? How are these rules different from the rules you had at home when you were your child's age?

Yours truly,

Marcia