Norms in the middle for centerpiece:

Engaging in this type of work is challenging for many reasons--we may experience all sorts of emotions…at the same time, feel exposed and vulnerable. It is hard work and asks of us to bring our best selves to it. So, in order to do so we are going to take a mindful moment. It might help to visualize a student who has needed you to be their voice, or their advocate, or the student who slipped through without that ... .visualize that student and bring your best self to the circle.

Introducing rounds/ norms: Some of you may be familiar with circle practice and for some this is new, Take a moment to look at the norms. In a circle there is no hierarchy, no judgment, and we share the belief that We all speak our own truths. What is said in the circle will stay here.

We will be posing questions through rounds. A round is a pass of the talking piece in the Circle. The keeper poses a question, and as a participant, usually answers first and then passes the talking piece to the next person. You can choose to answer or pass. My role as keeper is to balance the circle and keep it focused on the prompts.

Opening Quote: We are constantly searching for ways that we can change the child..perhaps the first significant change should come from us. Perhaps we should first analyze and change our policies, procedures, and practices when dealing with hard to reach kids"
-Author Richard Lavoie from the The Motivation Breakthrough

Prompt Round 1: Which policies, procedures, and practices would you question and challenge within your district in the pursuit of elevating relationships?

Prompt Round 2: What barriers would you anticipate?

Prompt 3: What would you need to persevere to question policies, procedures, and practices?

Closing:
But simply announcing a commitment to "restorative justice" doesn't make it so. Restorative justice doesn't work as an add-on. It requires us to address the roots of student "misbehavior" and a willingness to rethink and rework our classrooms, schools, and school districts. Meaningful alternatives to punitive approaches take time and trust. They must be built on schoolwide and districtwide participation. They are collaborative and creative, empowering students, teachers, and parents. They rely on social justice curriculum, strong ties among teachers and with families, continuity of leadership, and progress toward building genuine communities of learning.