



Special Education Information

Dear Special Educator,

On _____, _____ will be participating in a powerful program called
Date School Name
Challenge Day.

Challenge Day is a one-day event that gives students, teachers, and adults a chance to get to know each other beyond judgments, images, and assumptions. Participants will have the opportunity to listen and to share with peers what it really *feels* like to live their life every day, and what it feels like for them to be a student in this school. Participants engage in activities that help them unlearn oppression and experience connection and compassion for their fellow students. We are asking the school to choose student participants who represent different cliques and groups at the school, so that the program can be as effective as possible for the entire student population.

We are writing to you because it is important that the workshop be fully inclusive, and that your students be considered as potential participants. We also know that you may need additional information to make an informed decision about what will be most beneficial to your students. We sincerely hope that you and/or some of your students will be selected to participate in this exciting and inspiring event.

Your students will be in experienced hands. The Program Leaders who facilitate the workshop are highly skilled, and can accommodate special needs. If a young person has an aide, then that person can be with the student as much as you or they deem appropriate. The workshop is experiential, so there is no "schoolwork". The only writing involved is an opportunity for students to write a letter to someone they care about. We will expect the young people who participate to stay for the entire workshop (unless they have a bus that leaves early, in which case this point is negotiable) and we are committed to including every student for the entire day (people can leave for bathroom breaks, etc.). Should the aide find it necessary to step out of the room with the student for medical needs we can work to accommodate that. The activities we do involve games and physical activity with safe physical contact. We teach about appropriate hugs and do a lot of hugging throughout the day. We play loud music and talk loudly on microphones—if someone needs to be further from the speakers we can accommodate that, but it still may be loud, like a school dance. Also, it is very common for students to cry or express vulnerable emotions. All emotions are welcome at Challenge Day.

All of our adult and student participants must be able to hold what is shared confidential.

When students share about their lives, they sometimes share personal information they will want to remain with their group and not become a rumor. With that in place, we are prepared to accommodate any person. There is more information available on our website www.challengeday.org, and your onsite coordinator, _____, can also be of assistance. Thank you and have a great day!

Your friends at Challenge Day