



Independent District 463

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January 15, 2004

Subject: Youth Frontiers Respect Retreat

The Youth Frontiers Respect Retreat came to our school for the first time and I am convinced that our school is a better place because of it. The retreat gave our students a chance to stop their routine and a chance to get to know each other at a more personal level. Parents, students, and staff continue to buzz about the amazing experiences and changes brought by this one day retreat.

The Youth Frontiers staff were phenomenal. Their talents seemed endless and their energy was contagious. The way that these people approached our students made it evident that they cared about each of them. The facilitators were able to engage all of our kids at some time during the day with their message, music, creativity, and humor. Students laughed and they cried and when the day ended, everyone that participated had a chance to feel what it is like when everyone works to respect themselves and the others around them.

Our student leaders and staff gained just as much as our ninth and tenth graders. Student leaders have made several positive comments including "I learned so much" and "It actually worked and kids are treating each other better." Teachers who were not at the retreat have discussed students helping each other out and are pleased with the enthusiasm that has been brought into our classrooms and hallways.

I would recommend the Youth Frontiers Respect Retreat for any school, as I believe each student should get a chance to feel and see what this day can bring. We applaud the efforts of Youth Frontiers for recognizing all the challenges that youth face today and dedicating their time and efforts to try and make our schools and communities a better place.

Sincerely,

Mike Mathies, LSW

Eden Valley-Watkins School Social Worker

*Educating one child at a time.*

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