



COTATI-ROHNERT PARK
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUPERINTENDENT

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PROGRAM “RACHEL’S CHALLENGE” COMES TO THE COTATI-ROHNERT PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

ROHNERT PARK, CA - “Rachel’s Challenge”, a school program with a message of positive climate change and non violence in schools will be held at Rancho Cotate High School on December 2 for all high school students attending Rancho, Tech High, El Camino, and Phoenix High Schools. “Rachel’s Challenge” was founded by Darrell Scott, the father of Rachel Scott who was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Rachel’s acts of kindness and compassion, coupled with the contents of her six diaries, have become the foundation for what has been described as the most life-changing school program in America. Rachel’s brother, Craig, was in the library that day and lost two close friends and narrowly escaped death himself. He was the only student at Columbine who was in the library, the worst of the killing zones, who also lost a sibling.

The program features powerful audio and video footage during a one-hour school presentation that motivates students to use positive change in the way they treat others. A 45-minute training session follows that involves both adult and student leaders. This is an interactive session that shows how to sustain the momentum created by the assembly. Approximately 40 to 50 District students have been invited to participate in this part of the program. At 7:00 p.m. that evening at Rancho Cotate High School, the Rachel’s Challenge presenter will conduct a powerful session with parents and community leaders that is open to the general public as well. Funding for this program is made available through the “Every 15 Minutes” committee.
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In addition, Rachel's Challenge offers a year-long curriculum called the Friends of Rachel (FOR) program that continues training students and plugging them into activities that continue the chain reaction of kindness to sustain the positive climate change in a school. In 2005, Rachel's Challenge was awarded the Friends of Education award from the state of New York. The school program founded by Mr. Scott has reportedly prevented numerous suicides, drastically reduced bullying, and in three known instances in 2007 alone prevented a planned school shooting.

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