

Elmira City School District



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Elmira City School District Welcomes Rachel's Story and Rachel's Challenge to Students in Grades 7-12

ELMIRA, NY, March 23, 2018 –The Elmira City School District is pleased to announce that on March 27, Rachel's Challenge is coming to Elmira High School. Rachel's Challenge is a national nonprofit dedicated to making schools safer, more connected places where bullying and isolation are replaced with kindness and respect; where learning and teaching are awakened to their fullest. Based on the life and writing of Rachel Joy Scott, the first victim of the Columbine tragedy of 1999, Rachel's Challenge provides a continuous improvement process designed to awaken the learner in every child. The objective is to motivate and equip students and staff to start and sustain a chain reaction of kindness and compassion that transforms schools and communities.

All students, grades 7-12, will have an opportunity to hear the Rachel's Challenge program. The program will be first presented at Elmira High School on Tuesday, March 27 with a series of one-hour student presentations and the initial training for our new Friends of Rachel Club. In the evening from 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., the Elmira High School will be holding a special parent and community presentation to provide an opportunity to experience what students experienced during the day. This program is free and open to the public.

This program is made possible through an Empire State After-School Program grant.

The Rachel's Challenge program will come back to Elmira for two additional presentations to students at Broadway Academy (grade 7) on May 17 and to students of Ernie Davis Academy (grades 8-9) on May 18.

Rachel's Challenge exists to equip and inspire individuals to replace acts of violence, bullying, and negativity with acts of respect, kindness, and compassion. Rachel's Challenge is based on the life and writings of Rachel Joy Scott who was the first victim of the Columbine school shootings in 1999. Through her example, Rachel's Challenge is making a positive impact in the lives of millions of people every year.

Superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and students bring Rachel's Challenge into their schools because of escalating problems such as: bullying, student isolation, teen suicide, discrimination, school violence, and increased disciplinary actions. Through powerful presentations, trainings, community events, and professional development, Rachel's Challenge provides the sustainable solution. Rachel's inspiring story provides a simple, yet powerful example of how small acts of kindness and acceptance motivate us to consider our relationships with the people we come in contact with every day.

Rachel's Challenge renews our hope that our life has meaning and purpose. Rachel's story gives us permission to start our own chain reaction of kindness and compassion, which positively affects the climate in our schools and communities.

HISTORY OF RACHEL'S CHALLENGE

A few weeks after the tragedy, Darrell Scott, Rachel's father, spoke to a Congressional House Judiciary Committee regarding issues of school violence. His speech has become one of the most widely read document on the internet. Shortly afterwards, he founded "Rachel's Challenge", a bullying and violence abatement program. More than two million students annually experience Rachel's Challenge and have the opportunity to accept the challenges, modeled after Rachel's life and writings.

Students in the United States and several other countries have heard the universal message of kindness and compassion through Rachel's story. Since inception, over 23 million people have heard Rachel's story in live settings around the world, at least eight school shootings have been prevented, and over 500 suicides have been averted.

The Scott family and other Rachel's Challenge certified presenters have reached millions more on popular media outlets like CNN, Fox News, The Today Show, Good Morning America, Larry King Live, Oprah, Dateline, O'Reilly Factor, Hannity and Colmes and numerous others. Mr. Scott has also authored three books, including the bestseller "Rachel's Tears." Darrell meets regularly with politicians and educators, and is also a keynote speaker at many large educational venues. He met with President Bill Clinton on two occasions and President George W. Bush has written a personal letter recommending Rachel's Challenge.

Contact For more information on how to have a Rachel's Challenge event at your school or conference, please contact us at 877- 895-7060, or visit our website at www.rachelschallenge.org.

ABOUT THE ELMIRA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Elmira City School District is a dynamic and innovative learning organization dedicated to developing learners of character who value their educational experience and can compete globally and contribute locally by collaborating with students, families, and community partners to provide meaningful opportunities in a safe and engaging environment for all.

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