

# ARLINGTON

## Public Schools

*Educating all students, preparing & inspiring  
them to achieve their full potential*

### NEWS RELEASE

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**Arlington (March 4, 2015)** – [Challenge Day](#) changed the lives of two groups of Arlington High School students and staff on February 17 and 18. February 19 was held for students from both Post Middle and Haller Middle Schools. This is an international one-day program established in 1987 with a vision of “every child living in a world where they feel safe, loved, and celebrated”. The program goes beyond prevention of bullying to include developing a supportive and safe school environment.

Over the six and a half hours on each day, two facilitators, along with approximately 100 students and 25 staff, gathered together in the Arlington High School gym to learn more about each other and how they can support one another. Student participants were invited from a variety of grades, social circles and experiences.

The beginning of the day was used to build relationships and support through interactive games. Adult leaders participated in all of the activities as well and were paired with four to five students during several small group times. The two facilitators from Challenge Day opened up and spoke about their own challenges growing up, making the kids more comfortable with sharing information about their lives. As the day progressed, participants learned more about their fellow students and staff in a comfortable environment. Many students shared their struggles and the challenges they face on a day-to-day basis.

One of the most impactful activities was “crossing the line.” The Challenge Day facilitators made statements and asked participants to walk across a taped line if they had experienced that in their own lives. For example, “If you have every been bullied or teased by someone in this room, cross the line.” Students realized they each have things in life they deal with and caring about each other helps.

Students at Arlington High School are working on growing this positive culture in their school. Activities are being planned to bring unity and a supportive atmosphere with their fellow classmates. A few days ago, Post Middle School students held up signs at the beginning of the day stating, “Free Hugs” so students coming to school could know there is always someone who cares.

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