

**CARUTHERS HIGH SCHOOL**

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To Whom It May Concern:

May 13, 2009

Thank you for this opportunity to share information about the Safe School Ambassadors (SSA) Program at Caruthers High School. The training for this program took place in September of 2008. We had 27 students and 7 adults trained. This may seem like a small number, but we only have 550 students in the school. We chose this program because we felt it would help our students become mature young adults with a sense of community.

As a school, we have the typical types of discipline issues that most high schools have: occasional fights, graffiti and gang issues, trash left on campus, and disruptive behavior in classes. Because we are such a small school, we felt that this program could make a huge difference and the impact would be immediate.

In comparing our discipline referrals this school year to last school year, we are down by over 150 referrals. The three areas that we chose to focus on were fighting and altercations, bullying and harassment, and graffiti and theft. Together with student input, we chose these three areas because we felt that these behaviors could reflect a positive change with interventions in place.

One of the most important parts of the program is the small group meetings with the adult facilitator. The conversations that our staff members have with our students might not happen without the structure of the SSA program. One conversation that I had with one of the adult facilitators was about bullying. Her discussion with her student group was not about the typical type of bullying; it was about disrespect that some students show to teachers and that this behavior is also a type of bullying. The impact that the conversations her group had can be felt throughout the school.

For the 2009-10 school year, we would like to add more students into the SSA Program. We will be able to do this through future training and assistance from Community Matters and the Fresno County Office of Education.

Thank you for your support of Caruthers High School and the Safe School Ambassadors Program. We look forward to sharing the positive impact of this program in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Orin Hirschhorn".

Orin Hirschhorn,  
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