

Title I Calendar

Connecting Home and School

Marv Grassi, Title I Coordinator: 617-349-6490

Debbie Bonilla, Family Liaison: 617-349-6492

A Day of Service and No Name Calling Week

In 1994, Congress passed the Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday and also designated it to be a National Day of Service. This is the only federal holiday designated as a day of service and to be recognized as a “day on not a day off”. The idea is to inspire all Americans to volunteer for community service. This day, which this year is celebrated on Monday, January 20th, brings together people of all ages to work on projects and to make life better for the community.

Making life better for everyone is also the basis of “No Name Calling Week” which is commemorated from Tuesday January 21 through Friday January 24. This nationwide initiative was inspired by the James Howe novel, “The Misfits”, which highlights the story of four middle grade students who try to end name calling in their school.

A little background about the theme of “The Misfits”. The book tells the story of how four best friends try to survive their seventh grade year after being teased by their peers about their various characteristics specifically but not inclusive of height, weight, intelligence and sexual orientation/gender expressions. The friends decide to run against more popular peers in an upcoming student council election but have no cause. Only after one of the boys hears what others are saying about his friends do the students find their cause – they form the No Name Party with the aim of wiping out name-calling of all kinds. Preteens/teens can relate to the book’s message about stereotyping and the harm that “labeling” can do to children.

The idea for “No Name Calling Week” was launched as a collaborative project between a publishing company and the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). GLSEN’s mission statement is to “ensure that every member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expressions.” This is a week “to celebrate kindness while working to create safe schools free of name-calling, bullying and bias.”

The following information, on the CPS website, highlights the Massachusetts Law on Bullying. The Law defines bullying as “the repeated use by one or more students of a written or electronic expression or physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property
 - Places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property
 - Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim
 - Infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
 - Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- Bullying also includes cyber-bullying

Dr. King’s message lives on during the National Day of Service and through “No Name Calling Week” and must continue on throughout the year. It’s a message of love, kindness and of helping neighbors. A quote from Dr. King sums it all up: “What are you doing for Others?”

Sites referenced: www.glsen.org cpsd.us www.nationalservice.gov www.keepinspiring.me