

September 17, 2006

To whom it may concern,

As the parent of 3 children who have been actively involved in the Friendship Club at the High School, I want to share a few thoughts with you about its benefits. Two of my children are in college, and one is a junior, still a member of this organization. All three of them viewed this group as an avenue for them to reach out and serve others. What they didn't know ahead of time, was how much of a blessing they would receive in their own lives.

The matching of the regular education students with the special education students encourages relationships that are difficult to develop during the course of a normal school day. These friendships are beneficial for all involved, and they soon grow beyond the school boundaries. When one of mine was a senior, she was asked to choose who she would walk with during the graduation ceremony. Without hesitation, she thought of her "buddy," and it proved to be a special moment for both of them.

Friendship Club has also given my children an opportunity to strengthen their leadership skills. It has definitely improved their communication skills, especially with those who may be perceived by some to be "different." It has helped them see others in a whole new light, not to mention that they have really had fun in the process.

I have talked with the parents of the special education students over the years, and they are quick to sing the praises of the pairings. It is a support to them as well as beneficial to their special needs child.

I am grateful that my family has had the opportunity to be involved in this beneficial organization.

Sincerely,