

TO: All Participating Middle School Principals
FROM: Daniel Q. Callister, Chairman
SUBJECT: 2017 "Do the Write Thing Challenge"
DATE: August 2016

Thank you for agreeing to include your 6th, 7th and 8th grade students in the 2017 **"Do the Write Thing Challenge"** (**"Challenge"**). Starting this fall, you will be joined by hundreds of other school principals from across the United States in a coordinated, unique effort to give students the opportunity to communicate their thoughts on the impact of youth violence on their lives and to make personal commitments to reduce violence. All costs for this program are generously paid for by our sponsors.

Over the past twenty years, the **"Do the Write Thing Challenge"** has proven to be effective in reducing youth violence in schools and communities across the United States. In that time nearly one million students have accepted the **"Challenge"** to do something to reduce youth violence. Hundreds of books have been published and circulated containing the words of these students, both locally and nationally. Recent research conducted by the University of Texas at El Paso on the **"Do the Write Thing Challenge"** found the program had a positive impact on the relationship between students, parents and teachers. Participating students exhibited a **"greater empathy and understanding for the victims of violence."** Additionally the research showed that participating students show **"more positive behaviors and attitudes towards peers and teachers."** The program has helped motivate widespread community involvement aimed at making schools and neighborhoods safer for young people. As a result the **"Challenge"** is especially proud of the support of thousands of adult volunteers across the country.

The packet enclosed, entitled Instructions for Classroom Teachers explains this year's **"Do the Write Thing Challenge"** in more detail. This packet includes a letter to participating classroom teachers and information about program rules, entry deadlines, selection criteria, classroom discussions, common core application and student recognition. All of this information can be downloaded from our website, www.dtw.org. In addition, a video highlighting the National Recognition Week can be viewed.

Your Communities In Schools Site Coordinator will be the contact person for your school. This individual will need to collect the completed student writings from your teachers and deliver them to the Communities In Schools administration office by **Friday, January, 27, 2017**.

If you have any questions, please call Gloria Taylor, CISCB Executive Director at 361-696-4030 x-1 or Christa Creek, CISCB Director of Programs at 361-696-4030 x-2. Thank you again for supporting this year's program. We wish your students success and hope to see one of your teachers and one of your students in Washington, D.C. next July.