

How to Plan an Ability Awareness Day

1. Decide what type of Ability Awareness Day you want to have

- Are you going to just do an assembly?
- Are you going to do rotations?
- Are you going to try to do both?

2. Get approval from the PTA Board and Association

- Talk to your PTA president and ask if you can attend the next PTA board meeting.
- Present to the board that you would like to bring the Ability Awareness Day program to your school and let them know what that entails and the benefits it has for students.
- Decide on a budget and ask the PTA if they will fund the program (\$200-\$1000)
- Vote on it at your next PTA Association meeting

3. Set a Date

- Talk to your principal and office manager and decide on a date that works. Be sure to look out for music, art, science lab, early out, etc.

4. Create the Schedule (see sample)

- If you are doing five, 10 minute stations, then you need to plan an hour for each rotation.
- See how you can fit every class in around recess and lunch schedules so that every class has an hour they can do the rotation.
- Decide how you are going to split the assemblies up, K-1, 2-3, 4-5, etc.
- Schedule the 30 minute assemblies around the rotations so every class can also attend the assembly.
 - You can also schedule the assemblies on another day if you can't fit everything into one day.
 - Give the master schedule to the front office the day of so they know where every class is throughout the day.

***This is the hardest part of the whole planning process, so if you can figure this out, you're good to go! Hopefully it'll stay the same year to year, you will just have to plug in new teacher names, etc.**

5. Create a Map (see sample)

- Talk to the office staff about what rooms are available on the date you've selected. This will sometimes determine what stations you are able to do.
- Be sure to leave the MPR open if you are doing assemblies on the same day. Don't forget to use outside space as well if you have that available.
- Try to choose spaces that will have the least amount of distractions for the kids.

6. Schedule the Assembly Speaker

- There is a list of speakers in the district Ability Awareness Guide
- Go to capousd.org – Departments – Special Education Services – CAC – Ability Awareness Program Guidelines

7. Decide what Stations you are going to do

- Use the district guide to decide what stations you want to do (see link above).
- You can also look at the needs of your school and come up with your own stations.
- Discuss with your principal the assembly speaker and stations you are going to do to get their approval.

8. Get VOLUNTEERS

- You will need lots of volunteers to make this day a success!
- Decide how many volunteers you need for each rotation and make a volunteer sign-up sheet with the specific times on it.
 - I like to include which classes are going at each rotation time on the sign-up sheet so parents can volunteer with their own kids if they want to.
- Send this around at your PTA Association meeting, email it to everyone you know at the school, have room moms send it out, put it on Listserve, etc.

9. Send Teacher Letter (see sample)

- Give each teacher a letter explaining what the Ability Awareness program is and how it is going to be run at your school.
- List their specific times for the assembly and the rotation so they know in advance what to plan on.
- Send this out at least 2-3 weeks before the actual day.

10. Plan the Stations (see sample)

- Type out a detailed description of each station: how many volunteers are needed, the objective, the set-up, how to run the activity, the follow-up questions, etc.
 - Place this sheet in each of the corresponding station rooms so the volunteers running it know what to do.
- Make a list of everything you need for each station
 - Enlist volunteers to help gather items.
 - Talk to other schools before you go out and buy supplies.

11. Assign Volunteers (see sample)

- Make a schedule of who will be where for each rotation.
- Teachers rotate with their students, volunteers run the stations.
- Email this to the volunteers a few days before.
 - Attach the Station Descriptions that you typed up so that the volunteers can read over what they will be doing before arriving to help.

12. Type the Rotation Schedule for the Teachers (see sample)

- This has specific instructions for the teachers about what they need to do and what their rotation schedule and assembly time is.
- Print the map on the back so they know where all of the rooms are.
- Give this to teachers 2-3 days before.
- Keep master lists at the volunteer check-in table in case there is a substitute or a teacher misplaced their paper.

13. Type up the Times for each Rotation to hang in each of the Station Rooms (see sample)

- Post these in each station room so the volunteer knows when to rotate the classes.
 - It is very important that classes stay on schedule.
- Write on there what room the classes go to next so the volunteers know where to send them (even though the teachers already have this on their papers).

14. Set-Up

- Set up a Volunteer Check-in table and let the volunteers know where it is.
 - Include maps, volunteer check-in sheets, pens, master schedules
 - Have someone sitting there 20 minutes before each rotation to check the volunteers in and tell them where to go.
- Set up stations
 - Enlist your volunteers to help go around and set up each station.
- Set up assembly
 - Let the office know beforehand how you'd like the MPR set up for the assembly.
- Volunteer/Teacher/Staff thank you treats (totally optional!)
 - Set up a table in the teacher's lounge with waters and goodies for the volunteers, teachers and staff to enjoy throughout the day.
 - Make a sign thanking all of them for their support!

15. Follow-Up Papers (see sample)

- Type up a little summary of what the kids did that day so that they can go home and discuss it with their parents.
- Leave a space for them to write or draw a picture of their favorite part of the day and what they learned.
- Give these to the teachers to complete in class if they have time and send home with their students.

MEDIA: You can contact the CUSD Director of Communications a month or so prior to your event and he can help coordinate media coverage if you are interested.

Email me (Sarah Draper- swdraper21@gmail.com) if you would like me to send you a copy of all of the sample sheets from the presentation. Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can help you in any way. You can do it!