

Introduction

Letter from Ruby Bridges

Dear “Walker”,

Thank you for your participation in The Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day! By joining me today, you have made it clear that you are ready to take steps to building a better future where racism, and all forms of bullying, have no place. We are walking together today and talking about ideas I have been discussing with kids throughout the country for years! The solution is really very simple: Treat others as you would want them to treat you. Basically, practicing the golden rule...

This is such an exciting day for me. Sixty-one years ago, I stepped out of the Marshall’s car and walked into my new school. I was a kid alone, surrounded by adults, and I didn’t understand why some seemed so angry while others were kind. It took me a long time that year to understand what was happening and why. My parents had only told me that I was starting a new school, and that I “better behave”. Looking back, I am grateful that I didn’t know what it was all about. In fact, I often say it was because of my innocence that I was able to learn the lesson that has shaped my life. That lesson is simple: kindness comes from someone’s heart no matter what they look like. We cannot look at someone and know whether they are bad or good. I had no idea at the age of six that I had already become an activist. It was years later when I started visiting schools and talking to kids like yourself, that I realized my journey as an activist had begun on my first day of school at William Frantz Elementary.

I am hoping that you realize that by participating in the walk today, you too are an activist. Some changemakers inspire others through simple actions while others take on a louder role. But each person has an important part in shaping our future. Every day you can decide to be kind, to help each other out, and to say no to bullying. I know that if we can commit to making that change together today, and each day going forward, that we will change the world together. Please take time to sit with your class or your family or even a group of friends and talk about the questions I have included. The first step to activism is to activate your heart. You must be the change within yourself in order to inspire it in others. I along with my team is committed to you, and the work you are embarking on today. We ask that you keep in touch with us and that we will reach out to you from time to time to check in and learn about your progress. Please keep in mind that we can all make mistakes and sometimes we all may need a reminder. The best thing to do is to recommit, reread your pledge and you can get right back on track. Together, one step at a time we can commit to a better tomorrow, and to stomp out racism and bullying!



With love,

Ruby Bridges

Founder of Ruby Bridges Foundation