



February 26, 2024

Dear School Administrator,

I am writing to request absence authorization for all Kiwanis student volunteers (Key Clubs, Circle K and other students) able to attend the 44th annual Kiwanis Special Games, to be held Friday, April 26, 2024, at West Valley College in Saratoga.

Every year the Kiwanis Clubs of our region sponsor and produce the Kiwanis Special Games. They were created to address the physical and emotional needs of the substantial number of very challenged children in the schools of our region. More broadly known programs, like the Special Olympics, presume a rather high level of function. The Special Games exclude no one.

In our last games, 970 athletes from 60 different schools enjoyed a day of victory, self-achievement, and positive attention. The force that spearheaded this uplifting event was the 290 student volunteers who came early, stayed late, and made it happen. Without their bright, capable, compassionate, generous, creative energy at its core, there would be no Special Games.

For our student volunteers, it is impossible to imagine a more powerful community service project than this event. One cannot be a part of the Games without being moved. There are no words to describe the joy that it brings to the hearts of the more than 900 athletes for whom this is the best day of the year.

I'm taking the liberty of attaching a letter written by a Key Club student volunteer, describing the impact of the Games on her.

It's also worth noting that discovering how positive the experience of working with severely handicapped children can be is not lost on the student volunteers, opening their eyes to a whole new field of career choices that might otherwise have been dismissed.

Thank you for your consideration,

*Nancy C. Pearson*

Nancy Pearson  
Kiwanis Special Games Immediate Past President, 2023-2024  
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