

This is a letter from an athlete's parent to her teacher.  
May 15, 2015.

Hello Mrs. A,

When I woke up on Friday, I had my doubts about how Srinidhi will do all these games in that huge place with so many people. I told myself that it will be a good day and if she gets tired, it is okay. Was keeping my fingers crossed with regards to dystonia, dance etc

I prepared her letting her know that this playground will be crowded and noisy and she will meet loads of new people. Being claustrophobic I told myself the same thing too.

When we walked into De Anza College I was overwhelmed by the number of people there and Srinidhi had the same look in her eyes and if she would be able to do all these games.

When the parade started, I felt as though my daughter and all her friends were rock star athletes. I couldn't control my tears when I saw all the volunteers cheer for these beautiful kids, on wheel chairs and some walking. Their smiles made me think they were immersed in bliss and pride. All the volunteers truly cheered them with their whole heart. The way the announcements were made, it felt , as though they were true Olympic stars.

After the parade, we were greeted by Srinidhi's group volunteers. She played the bowling game. She is holding the ball thinking why is everyone cheering for me so much. Should I let go or should I just enjoy the cheer? With the help of Ms. V she lets go of the ball and she hit almost all the pins. The volunteers were screaming on top of their voice "yaaaaay" As a mom, I was speechless with the way my daughter was cheered and motivated. She was so proud of herself. When she got her ribbon she was in cloud nine. The volunteers made sure Srinidhi was comfortable and checked on her every few minutes while we waited for her next game. She also did the 20yd dash. Srinidhi has seen track field when she visited her brother's school but she was wondering "is it real that I'm going to run on the tracks". With the help of Ms. V she ran very fast that I couldn't even record the event. She got first place. While she was running on the tracks, not a moment did I feel she was in her wheel chair. The environment and the positive feel in the air made me think of Srinidhi as a typical girl and not a child sitting in her wheel chair. Overall the moment was so surreal for me.

After the games while we were resting and I was feeding Srinidhi her lunch my eyes was gazing around. I could only see pure love, passion. The staff who came from different schools were having their reunions with kids who was moved on to different schools. Some students came looking for their teachers from past grade. The incredible effort taken by the PE teachers and the school staff paid off when all the kids were sitting in their stations counting the number of ribbons they got. kudos to the staff who trained the kids and the teachers who involved these hard working kids feel typical. In a nutshell the experience was euphoric.

All day long her eyes showed a big question mark on what's going to happen next but through the weekend and on Friday evening all she could do was smile. She was gleaming with pure joy that she was an athlete and was bragging to everyone who walked in to my house showing the videos I took and those 11 ribbons she got. I still cherish the look on her face when she got third place and not the first place. She kept repeatedly looking at Ms. V on why she got the white ribbon. Well, both Ms. V and Srinidhi have their competitive spirits sky rocket throughout the day.

Thanks a lot to you and each one of the staff who believe in our kids.

Thanks,  
Sumathi