

Bode Minor

What CELA Means to Me

What does CELA mean to me? When I was asked this question, I thought of all the amazing things that have happened to me at CELA in the six years I have been here. I started CELA in third grade and was a little nervous about starting a new school. What would the kids be like, would the teachers be nice, would I be comfortable in this new school? Those were all questions I asked myself when I first got here. It didn't take me long to realize that coming to CELA would be one of the best choices my family and I would ever make.

There are so many things that set CELA apart from other places that I don't know here to start. First off, the Christian aspect. CELA really teaches students how to be a Christian instead of just what Christianity is. Every day, we start the morning with CVLD which stands for Christian values and leadership development. In this time, we study a certain Christian value which changes every other week and we study how to use that value to become a better Christian. We also have the privilege of having a chapel every week which goes into the value that we are learning about that week and expands on it. There are also opportunities every other week for the students to lead chapel. It starts with 8th grade and goes down each class then going to the other 8th grade class, then to 7th grade, and so on. This gives us students the opportunity to teach the rest of the school about the value we are learning about and understand it better ourselves. It is an amazing opportunity that really helps me and other students grow in their faith.

Another thing that really sets CELA apart is the people. CELA isn't just a school, it's a family. The student body is amazing. Everyone knows each other and everyone is so kind. Everyone is very welcoming, and it is easy to make friends. The teachers are also some of the best around. They are all so passionate about what they teach which makes learning the material very easy. You can tell that they really care about you and how you are doing. They all truly want you to succeed. They care for you and

don't only want to help you grow academically; they also want to help you grow as a person. The people at CELA really make it a comfortable place to be.

The next thing that sets CELA apart is its leadership program. In my three years of middle school here, I have had the privilege to take two leadership classes which taught me so much about being a leader. It showed me how to learn from other leaders and that leading isn't just bossing people around and telling them what to do. It is building a relationship with the people you are leading and setting a good Christian example of what to do. The chapel buddy program is a great way to practice these skills. Normally, an older student, typically in 5th through 8th grade, is paired up with a younger student, usually 3rd through 4th grade, and the older student will pick up their younger buddy and take them to chapel on Wednesdays and chapel families on Fridays. This teaches someone how to take care of a younger child and how to lead by example. Sadly, we weren't able to do that this year with the COVID-19 pandemic, but we were still able to gather virtually over Zoom with the 3rd class. It was great to still be able to interact with the 3rd graders with everything going on and still taught me how lead. Because we are 8th graders, they look to us as examples and being on a Zoom call with them every Friday really taught me how to lead by example because I couldn't just tell one of them what to do and had to show them with my actions. Through all of the different leadership classes and opportunities at CELA, it had really taught me how to be a strong, Christian leader.

One last thing that sets CELA apart is its academics. I have always been pretty smart, but I wasn't really being pushed to my potential. However, when I got to CELA, that changed. I was able to go up in math classes and even take high school math. Now, I get to start high school next year in a class where I will be challenged instead of being in a class that could be too easy for me. CELA also has a fairly high standard for academics and because of the small class sizes, are able to teach each student at their own pace and tailor the curriculum for each person so they are always challenged. Through all of the resources that CELA has given me, it has truly helped me grow academically.

CELA has given me so much that I wasn't getting before. It has helped me grow as a person academically, spiritually, and a as leader. I am proud to be a graduate of this place and am thankful for what it has done for me. I would like to thank, my classmates, my teachers, Mr. and Mrs. Nahey, and my parents for giving me the opportunity to grow and helping me along the way. Thank you.