

Matthew Schiemann

CELA

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### What CELA Means to Me

When I think of CELA I think of the teachers and all the staff that make this an amazing school. I think of the teachers that greet me with a good morning and a good afternoon. These teachers that put their whole heart and effort into educating us, no matter what their mood is. Lots of times we can take for granted how blessed we are by them.

When considering the 3 foundational pillars that the Naheys' built this school on; Academics, Leadership, and Christian Values, I believe that the teachers do an amazing job of instilling these values in us. They not only teach us the given material, but they go farther than that. They are the ones, along with our parents that have shaped us into the Christian leaders we are today. These teachers are the ones who persevere with us and don't give up on us, even if we can be a little reluctant at times. I know at times I have felt completely un-motivated; stuck on an assignment and it was Mr. Hays who put that motivation back in me, who gave me that spark to keep working. This is true of all the other amazing teachers that always are willing to help. These teachers are special, because their idea of helping you is not to just give you the answer, but to rather let you learn through your own actions.

I don't only think of the teachers, however, but also my classmates. I am completely and fully blessed by all the people who surround me. It is my classmates who also help to keep me motivated. They are the ones that can bring my mood up and make me laugh, when I am having a hard day. The ones that I can talk to if I am struggling on an assignment. It is true of my classmates also, that they won't just give you an answer, rather they will help you figure it out together. If you ask anyone around, I am sure they will tell you about the blessing of this school.

Even though they are not always front and center, we are surely blessed by all of the Administrators and Faculty. They are the ones that don't directly teach us, but they are the ones that keep everything running smoothly. This past year has been especially hard due to COVID-

19, and it was our amazing administrators who kept it all running this whole time. Going back to the end of last year, the Administrators did an amazing job of providing the class of 2020 with a form of recognition, while most other schools weren't able to. A special Thank You, to them and the teachers, for giving us an amazing year, and for carrying our school through this disease. Personally, one of the many highlights of my mornings is getting up to the main door in the front of the school, and being greeted by Dr. LaFleur, who always will ask how I am doing.

Before CELA I would have considered myself a strong Christian. A Christian that goes to church, prays, and reads the bible, but I never fully understood the daily learning and practice it takes to continue to walk and grow in Christian faith. CELA, which encompasses our administrators, teachers, support staff and all the students, have made me grow as a Christian. This school has helped me understand what verses of scripture mean, and how it relates to my life. I know that I have grown not only as a student, but also as a leader and person. My experiences at CELA are something I wouldn't trade for anything. The reason I have grown is because the teachers here have not been afraid to push me out of my comfort zone, to make me try new things, to challenge me. I was hesitant at first, but through all, I was able to make new friends, and learn lessons that I will carry with me my entire life.

I will greatly miss all the wonderful people here that have made me who I am. A special thank you to Mr. Hays, Mr. Pepler, Mrs. Andreski, Ms. Stevanovic, and all the other teachers that I have had the amazing privilege of interacting with.

It is the simple kindness, love, and candor of everyone in this building that makes CELA what it is. Combined, CELA is what has laid the foundational bricks into our lives that we will grow upon, the bricks that have started shaping us into who and what we will be. It is all the students, the teachers, the Administrators, the Faculty, and most importantly the Naheys that I think of when I think of CELA.

Thank You