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8th Grade

What CELA Means to Me

To anyone who doesn't truly know CELA, it probably seems to be just a big fancy building and a traditional private Christian school. The name is simple: Christian Education Leadership Academy. But the past six years at CELA has shown me that those aren't just four simple words: they are a way of life. My experiences at CELA have shaped me to believe that I can achieve anything through Christ. Now that my time at CELA is complete, I am prepared for the journey ahead.

Coming to CELA changed everything. As a little 8-year-old, who worried about everything, the school was overwhelming. It was a big fancy building full of new things and new people. But as my journey unfolded, I found a relationship with God. Before CELA, I went to church I knew there was God and Jesus and to pray and be kind, but I didn't fully understand these concepts. *Who is God? Why did Jesus come? Why would God make sin? Why do I worry so much if God actually cares about me?* CVLD time changed all that. I went from asking these questions, to answering them. Now, through CELA, I have a beautiful bountiful relationship with God. As a result of this new relationship, I feel prepared, with God's help, to handle anything during my high school journey.

Before CELA, I didn't feel challenged academically. Most of the time I really understood the lesson however I would leave with questions, most frequently "why?" My teachers did a good job, and I just assumed there wasn't an answer to "why?" At CELA, all teachers care so much for each individual student's education. My elementary teachers inspired a love for learning that continues today. I appreciate the time I spent in Mrs. Johannsen's class and my mother's class, who has not only been a fabulous teacher in the classroom but also at home and will treasure those memories from both classes forever. All the elementary school teachers here, truly believe in the mission of CELA. In middle school, there were countless times when my teachers went above and beyond to help me and make sure my questions were answered. To all the middle school teachers I have had in the past 3 years, Mrs. Andreski, Mrs. Recht, Mrs. Blahnik, Mr. Hays, Mr. Peppler, and Ms. Stevanovic, thank you for caring about my education. The

teachers here also care so much about us personally. Through all the tough times these teachers, as well as Mrs. Shultz, Mrs. Ausen, and Mr. Much, have been there for me. Thank you. You all mean so much to me.

I think that every student can say that CELA is a place for preparation. Throughout my middle school experience, CELA has given me electives and resources to help me prepare for the future, even though I don't know where it leads me now. Electives like public speaking, leadership 1 and 2, civics, and ACT 1 and 2 are classes that I wouldn't have been able to take out of CELA. These classes introduced me to new concepts that will prepare me for the rest of my life. Aside from the required classes, personal finance and forensics have also truly prepared me for my future by giving me confidence and strategies for facing challenges.

The most important thing CELA has done for me was shape who I am as a person and Christian. In CVLD, Mrs. Daniels and all of my past homeroom teachers have taught me important Christian values I will carry with me for the rest of my life. Without these values sewed into us now, we wouldn't become what we need to be later. For example, the CVLD values conviction, responsibility, courage, confidence, faith, and gratitude will help students flourish in adulthood. Other values we learned, generosity, kindness, forgiveness, peace, and humility will all help us now and in our personal lives later.

Without CELA I don't know where I would be today. I definitely would not be the confident independent Christian I am today. Through CELA I am now prepared for the future instead of worried about it. CELA changes people. Those four simple words: Christian Education Leadership Academy, are so much more than just words to the students who call CELA home.