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What CELA Means To Me Essay

What does CELA mean to me? When I first thought about this question I tried to form my thoughts into three paragraphs, three factors, three reasons why CELA is so great. But you can't describe CELA in only three paragraphs. CELA is a place where students feel welcomed, where they feel that they can be themselves and feel accepted. CELA turns kids into bright, independent, Christian leaders and helps them develop a stronger relationship with God and that's more important than anything.

Before I came to CELA I went to a public school where we never learned about God or any Christian values so my relationship with God wasn't that strong. At the time I had an older brother Christopher and an older sister Lauren. When I was in kindergarten Christopher passed away from childhood cancer. He was only 7 or 8 years old when he passed and I was only around 6. Christopher was an amazing brother and he always had a very strong relationship with God, and I always looked up to him. That year when he passed I struggled a lot and my mom said I even drew some pictures of our house under a dark storm cloud. As the years went by I slowly became more used to the fact that my brother was no longer with me and would never come back. Towards the end of second grade we heard that a new school was opening... CELA. After touring it we knew this was the school for us. Soon I was entering the front doors at CELA and seeing all these new faces that would be some of my best friends. Since then my relationship with God grows every day through CELA's CVLD program. Every single day we start off the morning with reading bible stories, praying and learning more about God. Whenever I was ever having a bad day we would be learning a lesson that somehow tied right into

what I needed to hear and it would reset my mind for the day and help me refocus on what's really important. Because of CVLD I now have a much stronger relationship with God than I used to and have turned into what I would think Christopher would have wanted me to be like.

My mom told me that when I was at my old school I would never talk about Christopher and that I didn't feel comfortable talking about it. She said though that after my first day at CELA I told her that we all sat in a circle and introduced ourselves and I talked about Christopher for the first time in a while, and with completely new people. My mom said that when I got home she asked me why I now felt comfortable sharing about him and I said that I felt so comfortable because I was in a Christian school surrounded by other Christian students. When I said that my mom knew CELA was the right place for our family and that they made the right choice of switching to a Christian school because I was finally where I belonged.

One of my favorite things about CELA is having a chapel buddy. When you get into middle school you're assigned to a younger student to take to chapel and chapel families with you. When I was in sixth grade I was assigned to Cora Ellsworth. Every time I walked to chapel with Cora she always brightened my day. We would walk through the chapel doors and get high fives from members of the staff. This year because of Covid we didn't get to see each other much and my homeroom started going on zoom with the 3k class. I was assigned a new chapel buddy, Emma B. Our class even got to meet up with the 3k class once and it made my whole year. Having a chapel buddy throughout middle school has helped me develop into a stronger Christian leader and has made me appreciate all the aspects of CELA that make it so great.

One last thing that always will make me think of CELA is hugs. 😊 Before Covid all the students would be greeted at the front doors of CELA with big warm hugs from Mrs. Daniels. She would always wear a smile on her face and would always cheer me up. She is a picture perfect example of how welcoming CELA is. Her and the other staff members at CELA always are there for their students. Whether it's Mrs. Andreski helping out with a math problem or Mrs. Little showing us pictures of her bunny she got, they always make us happy and that's what CELA is to me.

It's a place where you feel welcomed and loved. A place where you'll meet some of your best friends. And a place where you learn to challenge yourself and excel as a student and Christian leader.