

Senior Speech - by Weslyn

at The Hiland Hall Graduation on June 7, 2024

Before I dive into my speech I would like to say, I know it is hard to sit through senior speeches, especially when you are in North Group.

I started at Hiland Hall when I was five. I have been here for nine years. When I started here I was very shy and spent Activity Time playing in the Beerhouse in Little Blocks, hiding behind it. I look back and can not believe how much I have changed. I was in the play, I played the Big Games, these are things I did not do my first year. I played a Big Game for the first time in my last year of North Group.

I have been going to school with Marlo and Skylar for nine years. Skylar and I went to preschool together, and I will miss seeing their faces in school. Marlo and I have sat at the green desks together making calendars in math, played witches in the tunnels, talked *Wings of Fire* to the point that it was a little repetitive, and joined the M.A.U. ski team together, she was the only reason I joined, talked about books, and now graduate together. Over time we have become closer, next year we are going our separate ways, and I will not see her in school any more.

Alita was the elementary teacher before Quena. She helped me realize that: one I did not have to do Little Blocks every day. Two that my teeth would start falling out when they were ready and that there was no need to cry about it. Three the capital of New Hampshire in Concord.

Annie was the middle school teacher before Brennan, to be honest I don't remember her that well, but I have one memory. I was putting on a skit for spanish about feelings and we were doing scared. I remember her telling me "the spider is not real, there's nothing to be afraid of" which did not help my performance.

Quena started teaching at this school when I was in my last year of North Group, and I remember her reading a book to the Elementary group and as a North Grouper thinking I like this book a lot, she had fairy hair, so she must be a great teacher. It took me a while to realize that she was not a fairy, but she was still a great teacher.

I met Matthew and Brennan the same year, but I feel like I knew Matthew before I knew Brennan. I first talked to Matthew in Little Blocks were with Lillian, Shiloh, Everett, and Iver we were building a house, first of many times that I have built house and marble runs with these

people. After six years Lillain and Matthew have become some of my best friends to the point we have our own country and presidential system for the country. Shiloh makes it so that the only thing I know when I start talking to him, that it will be crazy and every bit Shiloh. Matthew helped with the transition from South Group to Middle School, there was someone in Middle I knew well.

The first I remember seeing Brennan he was doing flips at the Picnic, which is a memorable first impression. I feel I did not know Brennan that well until he was my math teacher in my last year of South Group, because of Covid. In my math group it was Trace, Marlo and I, we were called the Long Division Leafwings, and Brennan would call us the LDLW. This was a time when we were not on Zoom and we were in person, I only felt like I only got to know both teachers better though my time in Middle School. Brennan also has helped me do homework to its fullest and tells me to re-read and run spell checker so that now I have a sticky note on my Chromebook saying "Re-Read! Everett didn't take out". Brennan has really helped me expand as a writer, to the point this year that I gave him a piece of writing that I had wrote out of school, he edited my poem for Open House, one I had written.

Tai and Camden joined our first year of Middle School filling out our group of seniors, marking it very fun, and sometimes challenging to play Big Games, and Stretching games. My favorite Big Game this year was the first senior versus everyone soccer, I don't remember who won but it was fun to be on a team with the other seniors, to be on a team where it felt smooth. Tai has a chart with which he keeps track of the goals, assists, great saves, and hat-tricks of any one who wishes to be on it. Camden always is helpful to check math with and has once told me he thought I had done a couple of pages wrong, and yes, I had done about three pages wrong.

Jessca helped me make my first tooth fairy pillow, read *Sarah Plain and Tall*, the first book that I read, that I considered a "book". All through my years here she helped me find a love for sewing, and the roots of words. One of the things I will miss most about high school is there will be no tea in the kitchen, no looking for Jessca's tea cup. This year Jessca read to Middle School at the end of the day reading some of my favorite story books, like Hob, and so many others that she has read to me that I know the story of, but there is something about Jessica reading these books that I will never forget. Jessica also helped me learn how to read, I struggled with reading, she was patient and read with me every day she was in.

Nancy was the Peg before Peg was here, Nancy helped me learn how to write, I remember sitting in the chair and Nancy telling me “Go do your W’s again,” I was tired and just wanted to do writing and drawing, but now I look at my handwriting and am glad that I put time in. Going through North Group and South Group with it being hard to write would have definitely been worse to go through than not doing writing and drawing that day.

I would also like to thank my mom, grandparents, and my aunt for getting me to and from school and sports, and helping out at school, and always being there for me.

This transition is a lot different to what I thought it would be, I feel ready to move on, something I thought would never happen, but I feel prepared and like my time at Hiland Hall has helped me be sure of myself, me come out of my shell, and helped me get ready for the next step. They helped me get ready for the next step even when I did not want the next step to come.