



## **Patience's Senior Speech**

Hello everyone, my name is Patience Goulette, I'm from Pittsfield Maine and I've been at MeANS since September of 2018. I came here for my freshman year after being homeschooled my entire life.

My lifelong friend Casey Plourde, a fellow senior who I'm very proud of, told me the summer before our freshman year that she was applying to a charter school in Fairfield. She told me about it and said I should look into it. I honestly didn't even want to humor her at first, I didn't want to try someplace new cause I'd done so well with homeschooling, and I didn't think I would do well in a school environment. Despite my reservations I looked into it and even half-heartedly applied, with my many nerves in tow. When time drew closer to my first day of school, I was terrified. Nevertheless, I started school, and not only did I adjust in due time, but I thrived. I met some wonderful people and made some friends I'll never be able to get rid of. I wouldn't have done so well in high school had I not had immensely encouraging, kind people helping me to succeed and discover that the only thing limiting me was myself.

I've been known to be a bit critical but had never realized that I was getting in my own way. I recall one of the instances that made me see this during my sophomore year apple intensive. It was the first time I had had Frank as a teacher, as at the time he was an 11-12 English teacher. I had to write something for my intensive project and I was so nervous to show it to Frank, cause I was a 10th grader and my work wasn't ready for an 11-12 teacher to see. I remember his positive feedback and him pointing out a simple writing error. When I saw the error I was upset about not noticing it myself. Frank said to me that my writing was good for someone of my age and that I shouldn't compare nor be so critical of my work because an educated adult found a mistake I failed to see as a 15 year old student who's still learning. It was something I felt I needed to hear.



As a homeschooler my work was only ever compared to that of an adult or to my books, my standard was quite literally *the* standard. It was when Frank said that that I realized there are so many milestones and opportunities to grow and learn throughout high school and those milestones were on *my* timeline. I didn't have to perfect everything before my teachers saw it...though I still do wish I could, and I used every bit of my time here to take advantage of all the opportunities before me, just as I implore current and future students to do. I went on to have Frank as an English teacher for the next two years and his classes became my favorite to attend, so thank you to Frank for being such a wonderful and encouraging teacher.

I had many other great teachers and staff experiences but for my next thank you I have to think back to my freshman year when I was placed with the most amazing advisor, Rochelle who guided me through a great -at times stressful 3 years. Rochelle was *always* there whenever I or anyone needed her and is the kind of person who truly thinks about her students individually as people and can engage anyone in some kind of educational project, and I'm so very grateful that I got to be in an incredibly lucky advisory led by someone who's truly a gift of a human. (say thank you Rochelle). My senior year I got to be in Jeff's advisory. I was so glad to have him as my advisor. Jeffy has always been incredibly compassionate and helpful, and despite having to put up with his jokes which are usually followed by his own laughter, everyday I've gotten to work with, learn from, and speak to him over the past 4 years has been an absolute pleasure.

Before we continue with the ceremony (I promise I'm done after this) I'd like to share a quote that I 100% admit I stole from my friend Zoe with her permission. This quote can apply to any and all of my fellow graduates "Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence"- Vince Lombardi