

# FOX RIVER COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

ACADEMICS ♦ ENRICHMENT ♦ ETHICS ♦ COMMUNITY

## Eighth Grade Reflections

Good afternoon. My name is **Byeong Chan, “Luke” Lee**. I cannot believe that one and a half years of my life as a student at Fox River Country Day School have already passed. I also cannot believe that I improved this much throughout my time here.

When I came to the U.S. for the first time, my English skills were so limited. For instance, when I had my first interview with Mr. Harvuot, the only things that I could do were smiling and nodding, which were good things to do, but they don't do much. Now, I can speak eloquently, I can write a three page analysis, and I can give a speech in front of numerous people IN ENGLISH!

I was able to improve so much because of the tremendous effort of my teachers, classmates, friends, AND my parents. So, I stand here to express my gratitude to these people. When I had a question, they always helped me with their mild smiles. When I had a problem, they were always near by me, and when I was sad, they always cheered me up.

My years at FRCDS were fascinating and fabulous. I played in my first basketball game and ran for student council president. FRCDS offered many opportunities to me, such as LOC (Leelanau Outdoor Camp), the rock climbing experience, and Earth Day. Even though I had to exert myself canoeing, climbing, and night-hiking, these events were meaningful. I learned how to be a leader, and how to be ethical. Throughout the years, FRCDS was a reliable companion to me. I'm really grateful for your support and effort. I appreciate you. Thank you.

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Good afternoon, my name is **Briana Pagos**. Fox River Country Day School has meant a lot to me. To begin with, there are the CBQ's that were taught to me during my three years at this wonderful school. They will always affect me. Using these CBQ's in my daily life has made me a better person - more creative, honest and reliable. Everyday that I come to school I feel at home.

I would like to take a moment to thank my teachers for guiding me through each school year. Who thinks Mr. Mikulak is scary? I'm pretty sure some of you do, but during these past 3 years I have learned that he isn't as scary as I thought...He is the greatest math teacher I have ever had. So I would like to thank him for teaching me awesome math skills that I will use forever. *A mi maestro de espanol, Senora Asconape, yo quiero decirle gracias por enseñarme un idioma tan fantastico para usar en un futuro.* Mr. & Mrs. White, thank you for showing me how to appreciate the beautiful world around me...what more could I possibly say! Oh and I will never forget Ms. Bierman's educational tirades about Hurricane Katrina. Since I really didn't know what was happening during that disastrous time, listening to what Ms. Bierman had to say made me more open minded and excited to learn. A great memory I will always have from Fox River Country Day School is our Lord of the Flies Survivor game and being kidnapped...don't ask...it's a long story. It was sooooo much fun.

But most of all I would like to thank my friends and family. First Layla, Henry, and Melissa for their good advice and for helping to keep school exciting, and Aliana, Luke, and Kyle for being there to cheer me up when I am down. I will cherish my memories with you forever. My brother Mario, thank you for waking up extra early to go to school because I had chimes. Lastly and most importantly I would like to thank my Mom for working so hard to send me to such a wonderful school to get this wonderful education. I am without a doubt going to miss this school and all the people here. Thank you so much for being an important part of my life.

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Hello, I am **Aliana Mestey Acuña**, and I came to Fox River Country Day School 3 years ago in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. At first, I didn't really want to move from the apartment in Chicago to here. But once I saw how everyone got along so well I knew this was a change worth making. I actually liked the silence in the air sometimes, and I know what you're thinking, but I actually am quiet sometimes. I will always remember how these teachers helped as much as they could with anything they could. That quality runs throughout the school and it shines through the students.

Some things that have really made this year great were our Advisory Meetings with Mr. Reid and Mr. Waller. They taught my group to really think about things from different views. And of course I won't ever forget the lessons we learned from LOC and how that brought all of us closer. I will absolutely never forget class with Miss Bierman, she always had new ideas to make class more interesting and fun. Thank you to all my teachers: Mr. Mikulak, Mrs. White, Sra. Asconape, Mr. White, Mr. Honey, and Mrs. Spears.

I would like to thank Miss Bierman for all of the advice you have given me in the past year. Without your help I don't think I would be as wise as I am right now. I would like to thank my mother for picking up her life for my education. I would like to also thank my aunt and uncle for always being there at the moments I needed them most. I also would love to thank all the people who helped me in the process of picking my high school. I love and will miss all the teachers and 7<sup>th</sup> graders that have stuck with me from the beginning.

7<sup>th</sup> graders, make sure you appreciate what you have now because when you are leaving all the good things will be over and you will miss it. Thank You!

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Good afternoon/morning. I don't know because I forgot my watch at home along with some of my homework. As many of you know, my name is **Kyle Garand** and I've been going to school here since preschool.

I have very fond memories of this school. Let's start with preschool, when I was three years old and three feet tall. This was when I first met Mr. Mikulak. It was like shaking hands with God. In fact, preschool was my favorite grade because there were no organized classes, it was always play time, and because I got to take a nap during the school day without getting in trouble. Then came lower school, which it took some time to get used to because I actually had to learn something and because there were no naps. And then there was 4<sup>th</sup> grade, which was the hardest because I was given as much homework as I have now. Then there were 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, which were a bit of a bumpy ride. And then, surprisingly, I ended up here.

I would like to thank two teachers specifically. First, Miss Bierman for teaching me for the past two years, and the second teacher is Mr. Mikulak. Throughout all these years he has always been there when I needed help. Thank you.

I would like to thank my mom and my dad because they made it possible for me to get a better education at this school, and because they always put up with me. After spending most of my life at Fox River Country Day School, I am ready to start a new adventure. Thank you.

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Hi, I'm **Melissa Danielle York**. I've been attending Fox River Country Day School for three years now. FRCDS has shaped me in many ways – from study skills to teamwork.

I'm like a tree. I need water, sunshine, and love to grow. I won't grow if I don't have those things. The people here at FRCDS were and forever will be my water, sunshine, and love. All this growth and education reminds me of when I first read the mission statement of Fox River: "The mission of Fox River Country Day School is to educate the whole child through a values based curriculum conducted in a home-like environment combining academic excellence with individual character development." And that's exactly what the school does. No tricks included.

At this time, I'd like to thank my mom and my Godfather for supporting me and giving me so many opportunities, like the chance to get a wonderful education. I'd also like to thank my sister for taking time out of her busy life to drive me back and forth each weekend. Also, thanks for making sure I did my homework.

I've also lived at the dorm for three years. That was a life-changing experiment. At first, I thought I was going to be homesick, but I wasn't because there was too much fun and happiness to feel sad. I want to thank Mr. Nathan and Ms. Carla for being my mommy and daddy while at the dorm. I also want to thank Josh and Shakur. You were my best dorm friends – we always had good times, especially when we would go out for dinner.

Now, on to the math portion of my three years. I remember in 6<sup>th</sup> grade math, Mr. Mikulak and I would have verbal battles and everyone would watch. I used to think he was out to get me, but now I know he was trying to help me, which I thank you for.

Wow! Just last year I thought eighth grade was going to be hard, but it wasn't. It was just a lot of work. Now, I'm ready to tackle high school. I have so many good memories that I will carry on forever, like the ice fight in the dorm, the after dinner games, the Lord of the Flies challenges. So many to list. But now, this tree is finally ready to branch out. Thank you.

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Good afternoon, my name is **Henry Ji**. First, I would like to thank my family. My parents sacrificed a lot in order for me to be at this graduation. So I want to appreciate them before I start my speech. Thank you for your support.

2006 and 2007 were very important and exciting years for me. Not only because I came to America, but also because I attended this great school, Fox River Country Day School. When I first stepped into an American airport, I was nervous and, honestly, worried about racism. But, after I started attending this school, my nerves disappeared; they were gone! Teachers and friends embraced me compassionately and tenderly.

FRCDS was a great teacher for me. The campus taught me the importance of nature, the school taught me about individually, and my friends and teachers loved me and taught me massive amounts of knowledge. Ms. Bierman debunked the idea that reading is boring. Ms. Mack used her precious weekends to edit my essays. Mr. and Mrs. White were so enthusiastic while teaching us about nature. Mr. Mikulak was passionate and eager when he taught me new math concepts and fixed my work. My dear friends used patience to understand my unique mind.

Because they understand and respect who I am, I have changed and found my own individuality. I used to listen only the music from MTV and wear boring and plain clothes. But now I wear unique and special clothes and listen to Marilyn Manson. I found out how important individuality is here at FRCDS.

I have loved being at FRCDS. I will never forget the experiences that I have gained from this school. I will miss you guys but don't worry; I will be back with my little brother Charlie, Thank you.

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Good morning/afternoon, my name is **Layla Sherman** and this was my first year at Fox River Country Day School. I have been fortunate enough to have the wonderful opportunity to go to this amazing school.

First, I'd like to thank my mom, Melanie, my step-dad, Philipp, and my dad, Todd for supporting me in everything that I do. I'm extremely grateful to them for letting me become more and more independent. I wish I could have convinced myself to come here sooner!

I will always remember Mr. Mikulak's unique sense of humor, and how Miss Bierman always made us laugh, whether it was her exaggeration as a love-bitten Romeo and *Romeo and Juliet*, or her famous, home-made *Lord of the Flies* video for her feminist high school English teacher.

Senora Asconape, you are the reason I will be taking Spanish 2 or 3 in high school. Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. White, for giving me a new love in science – freshwater ecology. Thank you Ms. Carla and Mr. Nathan for being my first (and the best) dorm parents. Ms. Carla, I'll miss your butterfly kisses. Mr. Nathan, I will miss your hilarious jokes, like "Superstar!"

Aliana, Luke, and Kyle, you have made 8<sup>th</sup> grade really wonderful! Briana, Melissa, and Henry, you are my best friends. Let's all stay in touch. Our memories of middle school will last a lifetime, from LOC to graduation, and to the Newfoundland trip.

I plan to say this forever: "don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened." Thank you.