

Adversity Overcome

- Dan Rosenberg

High school's been a whirlwind four years for me. It is unbelievable to think that I will be graduating and moving on to the next phase of my life this Sunday. It is a cliché, but it really does seem like just yesterday that I was at Step-up Day, worrying about what I was going to do in such a large and unfamiliar place. I joined the newspaper and started writing for it my freshman year, and back then there were only five or six other people consistently writing. It is pretty wild that we have a staff of over 20 people now, and there are a lot of times we have a surplus of articles. That certainly was never a concern when I was a freshman.

Since I joined the paper, I have been thinking about what I wanted to write in my last article. It is the high school version of a swan song; the last word I will have as a student at Marblehead. After my sophomore year, I thought that the thing to do would be to lambast the administration. There was so much turnover and in-fighting; it was a sad state of affairs honestly. But the more I thought about what that article would be, the less I wanted to write it, for a few reasons. The first is that the article would cast the amazing accomplishments of this senior class in a negative light. The fact is, we have done incredible things; we have put dozens of kids into great schools, won tons of awards, and produced some fantastic tangible work, in fields from art to history to math, and we have done it all in spite of the instability of our administration throughout our four years of study.

The second reason is that it would diminish the stellar work our teachers have done. They have faced a lot of adversity as well, but the one constant among the teachers of Marblehead High School is that they have never wavered in their commitment to helping students. Amidst all of the uncertainty at the top, in all of my four years I have had teachers who really and truly care about their students, and who are ready and willing to go above and beyond the call of duty to help and nurture their charges. These are people who deal with teenagers on a daily basis, which is a serious undertaking in and of itself. Lost in all of the compliments and accolades given to the students is the recognition these teachers deserve, and I think it is much more important to put them on a pedestal than tear into the administration.

Finally, I think it is important to recognize that while there has definitely been some upheaval this year, things are starting to settle down in Marblehead. I think Superintendent Perry should be commended for the work she has done so far; she has been connecting with students, and she has also done a good job in smoothing out the issues our school committee had. Is Marblehead High School totally fixed? By no means. There are going to be some more rough times ahead, especially since the class sizes for the next couple of years at Marblehead are going to be even larger than the last couple. But, I think that some stability at the top will certainly help things move in the right direction.

What is important is that everyone understands two things about Marblehead High School. The first is that things are not perfect, and there are clearly issues that need rectifying. But secondly, and far more importantly, is that the students and teachers at Marblehead can

weather any storm. Through some tumultuous times, they have shown, and will continue to show, their fortitude and ability to adapt. In an ironic turn, the most valuable school lesson we will take away from MHS is that even in times of great uncertainty, with focus and determination, it is possible to achieve at the highest levels.

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