Colby Boman, 7th Hour, EAT

**Synthesis Paper**

 Model High School has had the biggest impact on not only me as a person, but on my education experience throughout this past semester. Although I only took one class, as that was all that my schedule allowed for this year, I couldn’t be happier about my decision to become a Model High School student. My decision to sign up for classes here was very easy and has always been something I wanted to do. People compliment the teachers, the learning environment, as well as the classes offered and this was something I was happy to hear about. These positive things were not my driving force to become a student here, while instead they were things that reinforced my own belief that I would succeed in this environment. I was tired and bored of the same lessons over and over again in my high school courses and thought it would be good to have a little change. I also believed I would succeed better in an environment filled with people who WANT to learn, rather than being forced to learn to get into a good university. Once my mind was made up, and Andreas Expressive Art Therapies class was on my schedule for my junior year, I could not wait to start attending Model.

 I have attended school in the Bloomfield Hills School district for seven full years now. I have taken courses that interest me and I believed I would do well in. However, this selection is slim and often times extremely repetitive. I have never had a problem achieving and maintaining good grades, nor have I ever had an issue finding classes that interest me. Some of my favorite and most interesting classes I have been enrolled in at Lahser are Chinese and AP Chemistry. I am just completing my third year of Chinese and couldn’t be more pleased with the curriculum. I enjoy the teacher as well as the language so that makes the course something that I am interested in. Also, I enrolled in AP Chemistry this year and although it was my lowest grade (B-), I am so thankful I took the class. It was extremely challenging, and at times could be beyond frustrating, but this only pushed me harder and made me want to succeed more. With all of that said, these courses were very similar. Not in the course material, but by the way it was taught. I do not enjoy sitting and listening to lectures everyday for 90 minutes, all day. I do not enjoy getting assigned hours of homework that I have no interest in doing, which results in sloppy work and little effort put forth, nor do I enjoy being tested every week to see what I was supposed to learn. I was a very sheltered learner and had no personal drive to go above and beyond. In addition, I never learned or even thought to connect what I learn in each class to gain even more knowledge. Instead I would sit back and do what I needed to do to get by in my academic courses. A MHS core competency I really wanted to be a part of, but was unable to fully do at Lahser, was form quality relationships. This includes both students and teachers. I am a very easygoing person therefor I am able to make friends easily and get along with teachers, but these are all just surface relationships. It is hard to become close with a teacher when they have 200 other students to teach the same material and don’t really care about your personal growth and success. The same thing goes with my peers. At Lahser not everyone wants to be there learning new material, which makes it difficult to form new friendships when you don’t want the same things. After many years of this same old education routine, I decided it was time to sign up for a Model course.

 When it was time to choose which Model course I wanted to take, I had no issue deciding. I knew I wanted to take a class with Andrea, and Expressive Art Therapy sounded perfect for me. It was a class I was interested in, and I knew I would succeed because of this. I had Andrea as a teacher in middle school, so I knew I wanted to take my first Model course with her. I couldn’t be happier with my decision to take this class. I learned how to think outside the box, push myself further, and become more creative. I also formed the quality relationships I was looking to form. Not only did I become closer with Andrea, but I also met a lot of new students that shared the same interests and personal drive as me. Another core competency I gained from my first course at MHS was quality work. Due to the fact that I enjoyed learning the material in the class, I was able to put my best foot forward and put all the effort I could into my assignments. We had three journals over the semester and I took the time and energy necessary to create these, and received an A on all three. Another unique experience I had at MHS that I believe I benefited from greatly was the semester project. I chose writing therapy very early on and stayed on top of my research. However, this was a very narrow topic and it was difficult to find enough information to complete the requirements. I did my best with the material I had, but when I put the project together in the end, it was not enough. Luckily, Andrea gave me the opportunity to change my area of focus and redo my project. I ended up choosing art therapy as my therapy to research and made an iMovie. I felt a personal connection to this topic and was able to put together a really great final product. This was a great experience for me because it showed Andrea cared about my personal success, and not just giving me a letter grade that is supposed to determine how much I learned or didn’t learn.

 Overall, I couldn’t be happier with my decision to take a Model course. Because I benefited and enjoyed my experience so much at MHS, I have enrolled in 5 courses for my senior year. I am looking forward to continuing to grow and form more relationships with more students and teachers that care about my success and learning experience. I am also so grateful that I was able to be successful and learn as much as I did this year, because I have only grown and become more intelligent. I am also grateful that I signed up for the course I did, because nothing like EAT is offered at Lahser or Andover. I really enjoyed and will continue to enjoy attending Model because it makes me feel comfortable, and only enhances my desire to learn.