

Seung Eun Lee

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Two and a half years ago, a Korean girl came to the United States with her mother and brother. It was not her first time coming to this country, but the idea that she would be living here at least several years made her both feel thrilled and frightened just as any other foreign teenager would normally feel. When she enrolled in high school, the first thing she worried about was whether she would fit in. She was anxious about her classes and that she may fall behind because her English wasn't as good enough as the American students. That girl is me, Seungeun Lee and I am now in 11th grade at Walt Whitman High School.

I came to the United States in 2007 and started high school in the 9th grade at Walt Whitman High School. As I prepared to enroll in the American education system, I received a lot of help from many people, especially from the ESOL Korean Parent Community Coordinator,

Dr. Angela Kim. I remember the day I first went to the Education board with my mom and my brother to take an English test and to have my school assigned. Since we were new to American education system including my mom, I was relieved when Dr. Kim came to us with a smile at the board building. She gave us lots of great information and helped us go through the procedures that we needed. Since then, she has been counseling and advising me through all these years. She is our family education counselor and I believe that she has helped many other Korean families as well.

I am currently taking Honors English 11, Honors Modern World history, AP biology and AP calculus. But before I was able to get into these classes, I took some ESOL classes at school

and those classes helped me tremendously and I really appreciate Ms. Maroni for helping me to successfully go through ESOL in my freshman year.

I remember my first day of school as really exciting. However, at the same time, I was scared of the unknown. I started with ESOL 5. The ESOL 5 class was comparatively small in number and all my classmates were also foreign students in America. I felt more comfortable around them and more confident when I was doing my speech or presentations. Also the teacher, Ms. Maroni, was very understanding and patient with the students. She guided us through not only various academic work such as Shakespeare plays, speech, and essay writings, but also provided us opportunities to experience the American culture with lots interesting of activities. All these ESOL classes were the fundamental steps and the steps were strong enough for me to get this far in a rather short time period.

As an 11th grade student, I am now picturing myself majoring a biology field in the future. It is now only a dream, but I will put my best effort to achieve that goal. I think I am a lucky person for taking wonderful ESOL classes, having good teachers. Counselor and ESOL Korean Parent Community Coordinator, and a great MCPS county system. I am proud that I was once an ESOL student. Thank you for listening! ☺