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My years in high school have been very tough. 4 years of ups and downs, mostly down. But I wouldn't change any of it. I discovered 3 central truths that I acquired from my experience at PACE. I discovered the importance of priorities, friends aren't forever, and the things you do now will always catch up to you. I will keep these lessons with me forever.

PACE has taught me that having priorities is everything. Making time for certain things is very important. There was a time that I had no cares in the world. I was into partying and doing any type of drug. But the harsh reality hit me when my mom had a hard time making ends meet. My dad was in and out of jail. So at the age of 16, you can say I kinda grew up over night and got my priorities straight. I had to teach myself that things I was doing in the past no longer matter, there was no more time for that. I got a job and started working 40 hours a week, school went to the back burner. It honestly took me 4 years, and to be moved to PACE that school is the most important priority.

Friend and friendships don't last long once you hit high school. Friends that you thought you were going to have forever, you barely even talk to anymore. And the friends you think you have either turn their backs on you or are just fake in general. In high school I met my best friend and we haven't been separated since. As long as you have that one person you will be alright. Sometimes you have no choice to keep people at a distance.

The things and decisions that I have made in high school really got me where I am today. I thought that there was not going to be any consequences to me not going to school. Or me doing the drugs that I was that I was going to be fine. But the reality hits

harsh. Things that you do now will always catch up to you. And my decisions that I made make me the Jaëlan that I am today. I used to keep a journal and write down things that I learned throughout the day and I would read them when I was stuck at a crossroad. I found comfort in reading, which is crazy because I never liked to read.

In conclusion I wouldn't change a thing about my experiences in life and in high school. I will keep these lessons with me forever.