

GUEST ESSAY

What Grown-Ups Don't Understand About School

What is school really for? Students at Oakland's Fremont High answer this question with their cameras.

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By Fremont High School students

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OAKLAND, Calif. — School is a community, a common place to gain relationships. School is for social interactions and learning to become an active member of society.

Most grown-ups believe that school is only for learning back-to-back. They don't understand the parts that build character for us teens. They don't understand that school is where we grow and learn to express ourselves. The things we go through are like the practice tests for what comes next.

These photos show the community and social parts of our school, Fremont High; they show the common struggle and the growth that you can get only from a high school. The photos were taken over the course of one busy week in August by students in Fremont's media academy. Each photo has a caption written by the student photographer. We also have quotes from Fremont students sharing their view on what school means to them. — **Kendal Erving, 15, sophomore**

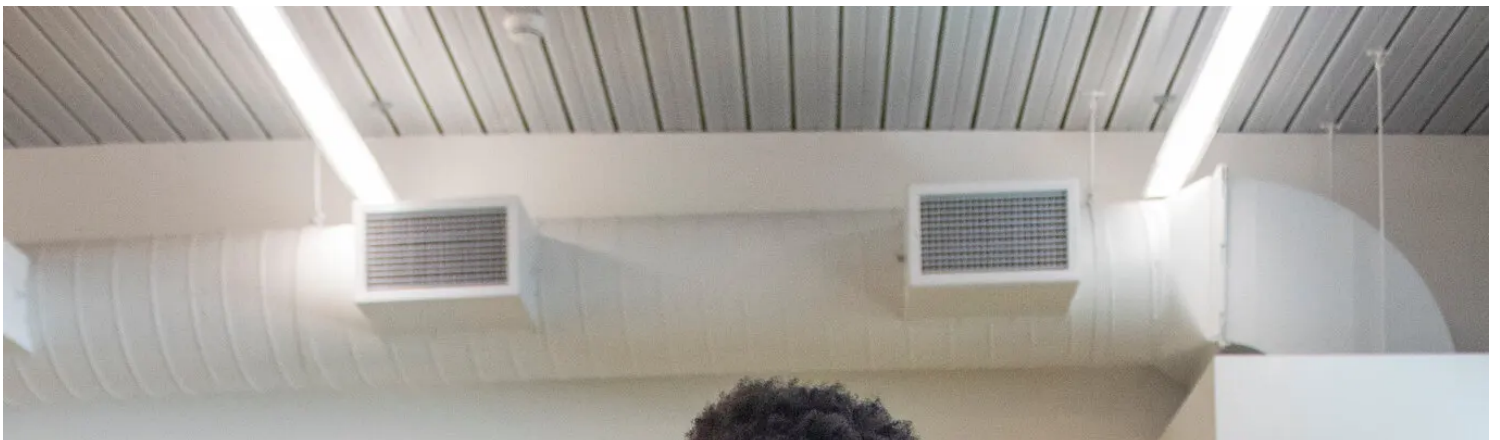


Fremont High School sometimes feels small, with around 1,000 students. But it's during the passing period that I get my daily reminder of how big the school really is. Passing period makes the school feel lively. You see groups of friends talking to one another or teachers greeting their students. Fabiola Chavez Ayala





Anthony is always full of energy and excitement, even in the early morning before class starts. His favorite thing about school is hanging out with friends and doing sports. Yizel Ceja Martinez





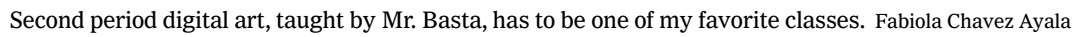
Mr. Harris explains government econ to two students, Gladys and Abygale; they've been joking a lot during his lecture, so they need a little support. Santiago

“School is about making mistakes and learning from them. School is the prime time in life to make as many mistakes as you possibly can so that you can learn from them and not repeat those same mistakes again in adult life, where they could have more drastic consequences.” — Victor, 15

“Being in school lets you be yourself. School is where you can be anyone without anybody judging you. A school is a place where people want to see the real you.” — Evette, 15



Ms. Zap, an English teacher, takes attendance. Jahmese Jones Dunbar





Goofing off during Spanish class, the last class of the day, a.k.a. the most relaxing period of the day. Jahmese Jones Dunbar

“For me, school is hard, but other people think that school is easy. Parents think that being in school doesn’t make you tired, but in reality, it does.” — Jayla, 15

“School is somewhere you can build your confidence in life, even if you are not too sure about it.” — Destini, 15



“Take a picture of us,” say Mar and Neeya. Jahmese Jones Dunbar



Vanessa is getting ready to enter her A.P. world history class and then wonders, “What is the point of having lockers if we can’t use them?” Yizel Ceja Martinez



Lunch from the school cafeteria: a chicken burrito and some fruit. The burrito actually tasted pretty good. Michael

“I think what adults misunderstand about what school means to me and my friends is that school is vastly different from when they grew up and went to school. Things that applied to them when they went to school don’t necessarily apply to the current school demographic. Trends and people that were popular when they were kids aren’t popular now.” — Victor, 15



Jimmie and I like to joke around with each other. Recently, I saw him do a pose from a famous anime called “JoJo's Bizarre Adventure.” The pose is known to be made by someone named Dio, so we call it the Dio pose. I dared him to do it, and to my surprise, he did it almost perfectly. Fabiola Chavez Ayala

“Grown-ups misunderstood that school isn’t just a place about learning; it’s more of a place to hang out with people your age who understand your perspective.” — Evette, 15

“People think that school is only for learning, but they’re incorrect, because for me, school is where I spend time with my friends. That’s where I have fun. We spend 80 percent of our life in school.” — Jayla, 15



Kelepi, Ahmed, Futa, Naki and Mona prepare to get in formation. Edwin Pineda



[1] Some upperclassmen chillin' out in the bleachers watching everything play out. Jahmese Jones Dunbar