

Paul Fitzgerald

NPS Alumni

I first entered Newington Public Elementary School in 2005. I moved to Newington from my old town, Boscawen, New Hampshire, where I already had my first year of kindergarten. Starting my first year of school as a first grader seemed like the worst thing in the world. I was the new kid, with no friends and no one to talk to. However, as my first weeks at NPS progressed, I realized something was different at this school that did not exist at my old school. I was surprised how I was able to make friends so easily with all the students in the class. Little did I know before coming to Newington Public School that this school would offer an educational experience unlike any other school. This was due in part to the small size of the school, but most of all due to the passion of the NPS teachers, whose ardent intentions of being the best educators they can be made the school so remarkable.

As a student who did not always align directly with the school curriculum, and benefitted from additional help, all three of the teachers I had stopped at nothing until I understood. The individual student specialization of teaching was the best quality of all the teachers at NPS. For me, the most notable goal I had set by a teacher for me as an individual was by Ms. Lodge. Her goal for me was to become a more confident person and student. This was a quality I lacked, because naturally I was shy and quiet natured. I really cannot stress enough this played as such a positive effect on my life, and would carry with me a throughout Middle and High School.

I continued on to Portsmouth Middle School from seventh to eighth grade. Although the significant increase in students at PMS was a big difference from NPS, I never felt as though I was unprepared in any way. I made a comfortable transition into the larger crowd. It also always

brought me joy when Ms. Reddick would come to the Middle School to check in on us Newington kids. Seeing her would remind me of how NPS follows through with their students, even after they have graduated, which is something very few students are granted.

Two years later, I moved on to Portsmouth High School. High School has been an exciting educational journey, as I can now choose which class I want to take that interest me most. I have enjoyed life science classes and spanish most in my four years at PHS. As a senior, I made the decision to challenge myself and enrich my knowledge by taking Advanced Placement Biology and Advanced Placement Spanish. These intensive courses have been challenging yet very engaging. Biology has been my overall favorite, because the vast fields of life science are always changing, with new information being learned every day.

Next year after high school, I plan to attend the University of New Hampshire. I was accepted into the College of Life Science and Agriculture at UNH with an undeclared major. I am currently undecided as to what I plan to major in, but I know that am leaning towards life science and health care. UNH captivated by attention, as they are flexible for undecided students who may decide to change their field of study later down the line. Another interest of mine is a study abroad program to a Spanish-speaking country. Spanish is a subject I plan to continue studying, and hopefully the hard work will pay off when I travel to another part of the world. Spain is a particular interest of mine that I would love to learn more about and explore one day.

I chose to enter a picture I drew in fourth grade for a school project called Artist in Residence Project. The writer and illustrator Marty Kelley came to our school to put together a book in which all the students wrote a short story and illustration to go along with it. The fourth grade class had a theme of writing a fable about rules when going to the beach. My drawing

depicted what would happen if you ran on the beach, which would cause you to trip. I chose this picture, because it represented the creativity and inspiration brought on by Newington Public School. NPS engaged their students into doing fun and educational activities that we would still remember years after. Making this book is an example of one of the many great memories of Newington Public School that I still cherish today.