

2022 Leadership Retreat

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Now that the 2022 Leadership retreat is over, let's recap everything. This was the first leadership retreat Oak Hills has had since 2019. This year there were about 125 students. This retreat taught students about leadership and how to be a leader in difficult situations when they might not necessarily be comfortable. It showed students that they should step outside of their comfort zone and just be themselves. Students had to be selected from a staff member who represented all the specific qualities. These were students who stood out to staff and showed that they deserve to go on the retreat.



I have asked one student and one staff member who went on the retreat for information. The student was Emma Herzog, one of my fellow Tartan writers, and Mr. Martin.

The first question I asked was: "How would you rate the overall experience?" Emma and Mr. Martin both said that the retreat was really fun and good. Mr. Martin states, "Students took advantage of the opportunity to meet new people, test their own limits on the high ropes course, and receive a powerful message from our speaker about priorities in life."

One of the challenges students were tasked with was the rope course. This forced many students to face their fear of heights and show that even if you don't feel comfortable doing something, you still need to step outside of your comfort zone and try new things.

The next question was: "What was your favorite part?" Emma said her favorite part was the free time that they got during the night. She got a chance to interact with students and she met new people while playing basketball. This was fun because she said, "I haven't played since third grade." Bringing back childhood memories even while she admits that she isn't very good. Mr. Martin's favorite part was "Watching the students conquer their fear of heights as they navigated through the High Ropes course to prove to themselves that they are capable of overcoming obstacles." This retreat allowed students to step outside of their comfort zone and tackle challenges that they might have not necessarily been prepared to do.

Another question asked was: "What are some things the retreat taught the students about being a leader?" Emma said she learned how to face her fears and get up in front of a crowd and sing part of a karaoke song. This retreat allowed students to show their true colors and be themselves without anyone judging them. Mr. Martin said, "Make sure that you are grateful for all of the people in your life who have helped you

get to where you are today.” Many people don’t realize how many people have helped or just been there for them to make them the leaders they are. The retreat allowed them to learn that you shouldn’t take them for granted.

The last question I asked both of them was: “What is one thing you would change about the retreat for next year?” Emma said she would change how they organized cabins. Once you get to the retreat, you and your friends that you plan to room with all run to a cabin and that is where you stay for the rest of the weekend. Emma said, “There is a lot going on and it is very chaotic.” If they were to change the process next year, a recommendation would be to make it more organized and plan ahead so everyone knows where to go. Mr. Martin said, “The weather on the last day where there was a cold rain would be the only thing I would change for next year.” Although you can’t change the weather and can’t predict it, hopefully, next year there is more sunshine to make the experience that much better.

Even if you didn’t get invited to go on the Leadership Retreat this year, make sure to do what is right and stand out more for a better shot at getting asked. Mr. Martin wanted to end it off with, “ I hope the students got something out of the retreat that they can bring back to the halls of Oak Hills High School. We are only as strong as our student leaders. Our goal is to continue to grow leaders in our building to continue to create a culture here at Oak Hills where everyone feels like they belong here.”