Dear Class of 2027: Graduating Seniors' Thoughts for Juniors (and the Rest of Us)

By Olivia Vance

As the 2025-26 school year comes to a close, for the Class of 2027, senior year no longer feels distant. And with that, college talk is no longer hypothetical. The steady build of anxiety among the junior class is hard to ignore, with everyone trying to answer the "simple" yet convoluted question: what's next?

With deadlines approaching sooner each day, many have no clue what to expect out of senior year. Familiar with the tension, uncertainty, deadlines, and expectations, the Class of 2026's perspective has been shaped by experiences rather than anticipation. Expectations of lasts, preparing for the next chapter of life … the Class of 2026 shares some advice to help put the Class of 2027's collective mind at ease.

Dear Class of 2026,

Out of everything you have learned, what advice would you have wanted to hear before the start of your senior year?

AJ Gallitz
"Senior year is a time when you have the ability to choose what you spend your time on a little bit more, so just make choices that feel authentic to who you are and what you want to bring to the world. Your energy affects both you and those around you, so try to contribute positively to the spaces you spend your time in. Most importantly, protect your friendships and make new ones!"

Liyah Keahey
"No matter how long you think you've had your friendships, there's always a chance everything can go left, and you have to start over."

Mia Mayo
"Lean in to school and try to be as involved as you can. There are so many great opportunities at Altamont to partake in!"

Jenevieve McNeil
"As over-said and cringy as it is, you have to just enjoy it – it goes by so fast! Also don't be afraid to just try everything, go to every sports event, cheer on your classmates and friends. Most importantly, just don't forget to slow down and take it all in. Altamont is unique in that you know most of your classmates since fifth or sixth grade, and watching each other grow is genuinely really special! … [And don't] shy away from making connections. Not everyone is going to be your best friend, but the more open you are to new people the more fun senior year will be for everyone! Also read the books for English because they're lowkey good."

Eden Moody
“It would definitely be to start writing your essays for your college applications now, or during the summer. Also, start applying to scholarships in the summer as well. Most of the college essays have changed [for the 2026-27 cycle], so you should definitely get a headstart on the essays that they ask you to write.”

Joe Porter
“Prioritize, not only the college search process, but also the actual college application process in the summer. It really is better to start earlier when it comes to writing college applications, especially if you are planning on applying to a lot of colleges or those that are very selective. If I were a rising senior, I would make sure to start working with Ms. Hardie and Mrs. Bond in the summer, while also creating a plan that lays out what applications I will finish at what time. Senior fall is still a hard academic time period, so it is great to have most of your college work already out of the way by then. If you have it done, you will be better positioned to succeed academically in the fall. This is important because you still have to send your first semester transcript to colleges you are applying regular-decision to. This is all coming from somebody who regrets procrastinating college work and struggled more academically in Senior fall than I had to.”

Kennadi Sullen
“If there is anything that this year taught, it is that everyone is on their own journey and the path that you take is your own. I realize that the person I was at the beginning of the year isn't totally who I am now and I expect to grow as life goes on. Who I am now isn't the finished version of myself and that's okay. Senior year isn't the end of it all. In fact it felt like this year I have grown the most. It's okay to change your mind and it's okay to realize that the goals you set in August might not fit who you are in May. To sum this up, the advice I would have benefited from at the beginning of this year is that it is okay to adjust your path when you realize that you have outgrown your original goals.”