

An OSS milestone: First class to complete 4 years at Our Sisters' School graduates

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NEW BEDFORD — Students and staff at Our Sisters' School had two very good reasons to celebrate when they gathered at the Whaling Museum last week.

One was that it was Graduation Night for eighth-graders at the private, tuition-free middle school for inner city girls.



Students from Our Sister School applaud the start of their graduation ceremony at the Whaling Museum in New Bedford. photo by David W. Oliveira/Standard-Times

The other was the fact that the class of 2012 was the first to go through all four years at OSS.

The 12 graduates, all wearing white dresses, waited a bit nervously until it was time for them to take the stage at the Whaling Museum's Cook Memorial Theater. But the butterflies were soon replaced by the sheer joy of the occasion.

"Here you are class of 2012! Are you pumped?" asked Lisa Schmid Alvord, president of the OSS Board of Trustees.

Schmid began her address by expressing gratitude to the parents in the room.

"There is one group we would really like to thank, and that is your parents," she said, "They are your heroes, they are our heroes."

Our Sisters' School opened in 2008 and it serves girls from income-eligible families who have a strong willingness to learn and grow. The school includes Grades 5-8 and offers a rigorous course of study and wide range of extra-curricular activities. The girls attend from 7:15 a.m to 6:30 p.m.

Jill Howard, OSS's secondary schools coordinator, said the girls are exemplary and dedicated students. "They are bright, successful, wonderful women who will go on to do great things," she said.

Participants in the graduation also included Bernadette Souza, who sang verses from "Somewhere

Over the Rainbow”; Krissy Dolce, who gave the faculty address; Alysha Dillard, who gave the family remarks; and the 12 graduates who offered their own reflections.

“The girls are amazing, it has been amazing watching them transform,” said Lisa Yates, OSS principal, “I cant wait to hear what they accomplish in high school and college.”

“They’re all very unique with incredibly different personalities,” said math and science teacher Caroline Sullivan. “They are all good friends, and a wonderful class.”