

Thank you for giving me the privilege of speaking at your graduation. As a new Superintendent, I asked some students in this graduating class on what they would like to hear. I heard a few key statements I'll share with you: keep it short, don't be a bummer, and throw in some fun facts. This is your graduation, and I am happy to comply with your requests.

In keeping with that advice, you gave me, I want to give you a simple and short message. Today is a celebration, and a milestone in your transition to adulthood. I am going to leave you with all the wisdom I can share on two pages of paper, and a few fun facts, as requested.

My first wisdom to share: It is easier to switch majors than switch careers. If you despise accounting in college; you may not love accounting in your 40's. Fun Fact #1: Oranges were not originally orange. In fact, they were green.

My second wisdom. In West Side Story, Tony and Maria find and embrace love. Reject hate, embrace who you are, and live your life not as it has been predetermined for you- but as you direct. Fun Fact #2: There is only one letter in the alphabet that is not included in the spelling of any state. That letter is: Q.

My third wisdom. Find a mentor, a coach, or someone that you can go to that will challenge your thinking and challenge you to be better. That person may be in this room. Fun fact #3: Cats have 5 toes on their front paws, and only 4 toes on the back paw. Unless you are in Key West, where cats are Polydactyl and have 6 toes.

My Fourth wisdom. A hobby is what you do in your spare time for enjoyment, a job is what you do for money, and a career is when you believe in what you are doing. It takes time to find your career, it rarely happens right away. Don't rush or act in haste on such big decisions. Fun fact #4: When Alexander Fleming invented Penicillin, he originally called it "Mold Juice".

I have only interacted with you all for a short time, but I already see this class of seniors is special. I loved watching you play, sing, act, compete, and

lead. The last piece of wisdom I can share, is to Bet on Yourself. The last fun fact is intended to bolster this wisdom I share with you now. Fun Fact #5: James Cameron sold the script for Terminator for \$1, with the stipulation that he direct the movie. James Cameron bet on himself, and never looked back.

Twenty years ago, I sat in your seat, nervous; but I was excited for something new. Worried about losing touch with friends, and if I had made the right choice. I thought I knew my path. Whatever path you believe you are on will change with time. Mr. Jarnis clearly explained what an adult journey looks like at National Honor Society- few straight lines and life is much more like abstract art. Embracing the journey does not mean giving up on your dream.

I would like to finish my speech by recognizing someone, and asking you, the graduating class of 2019, to help me in this effort. This educator has been with you from the start- as far back as your first day of Kindergarten. She may have been the only principal you ever knew, until you came to 9<sup>th</sup> grade. All year I have heard how special “her” class is- she told me about your character, your pride, and how this class was one she will always remember. When she talks about you, I can see the tears well in her eyes, her pride and happiness for you all. You may not know it, but she has kept tabs on every one of you.

To the class of 2019, I would ask you to help me recognize the efforts of Mary Murphy. Mary will you please come up and be recognized by the graduating class.

Thank you to the graduating class for allowing me to speak today, and for allowing me the honor of being your Superintendent.

At this time, I would like to welcome our high school principal, Mr. Dan Riley, to the Podium.