

May 30, 2024

## Blog – Graduation

The 2023-2024 school year is almost over and will culminate with one of my favorite days – high school graduation. On Sunday, June 2 at 1:00 p.m., we will have the opportunity to celebrate this important day with our graduates, their families and friends. It is also a day that we get a chance to honor our staff for all of their efforts in helping these young people achieve this milestone in their life.

The graduation ceremony is always one that touches my heart and even brings a tear to my eye. When “Pomp and Circumstance” begins to play and the graduates start their march into the ceremony, everyone stands to cheer on and congratulate the graduates. It is one way we can wish them the best as they start the next stage of their life.

During the ceremony, speakers will be asked to give the graduates a few words of advice as they go out into the world. Though I have had the opportunity to speak at numerous graduations, I never take this opportunity for granted and always hope that I can find some words that will suit this occasion. Since this will be one of my last graduations, I thought it would be appropriate to share my graduation speech with each of you. So here goes:

*Good afternoon. It is my pleasure to share this very important day with all of you. This is one of my favorite days of the year because it is a day when we get to celebrate all of the hard work that these young people have put in over the past thirteen years. They could not have gotten this far without your support. In order for any of us to be successful in life we need the support of others – in this case the support of caring and dedicated staff that helped you to grow academically and socially during your time with us and even more importantly your family. Those individuals who have always been there for you in good times and in bad. I would appreciate it, if as graduates you would take a moment to give all those who have helped you on this journey a round of applause.*

*Thank you. I learned long ago in my career that it is not the words that I say today that will be remembered, but how long it takes me to say them. So I promise to be concise. In looking back over my life and career, I have learned some lessons that I would like to share with you as you start the next phase of your life’s journey. The first is to be kind. Show kindness to every person you meet – each of us will encounter many hard times during our life and these times can be made so much easier by a kind word, a smile and sometimes a hug. Your acts of kindness to others will have a greater significance in the lives of others than you will ever be able to know and comprehend. I truly believe that we each have no greater calling than to be kind to the people we meet each day.*

*Second, don’t be afraid to fail. Failure is a part of life and something that cannot be avoided. We all fail, but the greatest failure is to give up after failing. Rather, take a moment to reflect upon why you might have failed and use this reflection to do better the next time. The more often you try something new the greater your chances of failure, but it is exactly these moments that also provide you with the greatest moments of growth. Sometimes, we let our fear of failure*

*deprive us of our greatest opportunities. So never be afraid to try. Yes, you might fail, but the effort you put forth in the trying will pay great rewards in the future.*

*Finally, never dream small. Don't limit yourself – you can accomplish greater things than you can possibly imagine and you are our future. When I was your age, my parents gave me one of the best gifts that I could have ever received – the confidence to believe in myself. My parents told me that nothing was going to be impossible for me if I was willing to work long and hard enough to achieve my goals. They did not promise me the goals would be easy, but they did believe that nothing was out of my grasp, if I wanted it bad enough.*

*Again, thank you for allowing me to share this very special day with you. I am confident that you will all continue to do things that will make us Viking Proud.*

It has been my pleasure and honor to be your superintendent this past school year. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with so many wonderful and dedicated people. Parkview will always hold a very special place in my heart, both now and in the future. Good luck and **GO VIKINGS!**