

Grade 8 Graduation Speech

Graduates, parents, staff, families and guest, on behalf of our school Board Trustees, our Senior Administration, our 1500 staff members, our 10, 000 students and their families, I bring Greetings to all and express our congratulations to you, the graduates for your significant achievement as a grade eight graduate.

Grade 8 graduation is no small achievement. There are still many millions of children around the world who do not have access to any type of formal education and would give anything to be able to attend school and to graduate from grade eight.

I have done a quick calculation and by graduating from grade 8 you have spent. 10 years in school so far, that's 1940 days, 9700, hour 582,000 minutes and that's just actual time in class from JK-Grade 8 and that does not include the time you spent outside the classroom that you have been involved in school related activities. That's over 1/2 million minutes that you have invested in your future so far.

You want to take that half million minutes investment of time in yourself and you want to make sure you get a great return on your investment.

You have now completed half of your formal education and have completed the first leg of your educational journey.

You have been well prepared to enter the secondary leg of your education. You have the skills, knowledge, attitudes to be successful and over the next four years you will decide whether to go on to University, college, an apprenticeship program or go directly to the world of work.

Your next goal is to do the very best you can to make sure you are successful in high school.

Completing high school will make a great difference in your life. Research shows that those who do not complete high school earn less from \$23,000 a year over their lifetime or average in today's money.

- High school graduates earn more than 34,000.
- Post-secondary over 41, 000.
- And college/University earn 80,000.

Also high school graduates

- Live 6-9 years longer in average
- Have better health and access to medical services less.
- Are more likely to lead successful lives
- Are more likely to have a family of highly educated and well-adjusted children.

You have already received an excellent foundation on which to build. I know for some of you your journey so far may not always have been easy, but you have persevered and you been successful so far.

Every one of you in this room has the potential to achieve and to be as successful as you want to be. There is absolutely no reason and no obstacle that you cannot overcome to make sure that you finish high school and to go on to additional education for as long as you wish.

On your journey you will find others who will continue to reach out to you to help you , guide you and support you to get even further on your journey. Make sure you enlist the right friends. Know the difference between true friends and false friends. True friends will be there for you to encourage you to help you to be successful. False friends are those who want to drag you down to their level so that you will not be successful. They are the ones that are not doing well at school themselves and are always in trouble with their parents, their teachers, or the law.

True friends can also be family members and your teachers, they have supported and encouraged you so far and will continue to be there for you when you need them.

I hope that in your own way and on your own time you will take a moment to express your appreciation to your true friends with a simple thank you. You can repay their gift to you by you in turn helping others who may need your help to be successful.

So as you move forward, there is a world of possibilities awaiting you. I am hopeful that each and every one of you will build on what you have accomplished so far to continue your journey to a successful future for yourself. Our society will be a better place because you have gone this far. You are our future. When you are successful, your families will be successful, our community will be successful and our Province & Country will be successful. You have great potential and you can be as successful as you want to be.

Continue to give it all your best and if there should be occasions when times get tough look for and listen to your true friends. They will be there to help you through.

Believe in yourself believe that you can be successful.

Congratulations on reaching your first mile stone and I wish you the very best and continued success on your educational future.

Your Future is our Future

Congratulations, best wishes

Mario Turco