

### Farewell

First and foremost, I would like to thank every single person here today. I don't care if you walked across the street to get here or if you flew halfway across the world, everyone here means something special to one of us and I'd like to thank you for showing your support.

When I was first asked to speak at graduation, I panicked--I wanted to say something powerful and that people would remember. Then, I realized that I didn't want to have a speech full of those clichés. Like "it's not the end, only the beginning" or "we are opening a new chapter in the book of life." I hate those sayings because I think they are way overused.

The Class of 2012 is a very special and unique one. We may not be the smartest or the most well-behaved class, but I think we are pretty awesome all the same. I am proud of how far each of us has come. I mean, if you had told me in grade school that I would be best friends with Courtney Paden in high school, I

would have laughed in your face. She used to take my string cheese every day at lunch.

This class has been through a lot together. Not many people can say that when they are walking down their halls at school that they have been rained and snowed on. Yeah, its been hard not having a "real school," but both us and the teachers made do with what we had, and look at us now. Even though we had barely enough time to get from class to class and our mods got really smelly when it was hot outside (I blame the freshmen). All of us here today are graduating and going on to do bigger and better things. I'm not saying that high school isn't important, I've personally learned so much from the past four years of my life, and I wouldn't trade that for anything.

We've all grown into (sometimes) mature young adults who each have a dream that we want to

follow. Whether it is starting your own business or graduating from medical school, we never could have done it without each other, all of our teachers, and most importantly, every single one of you sitting here today.

The most important lesson that I have learned from high school and will take with me into the future is a one that I have learned from Harry Potter. Hermionie Granger said that "...book and cleverness, there are more important things, friendship and bravery." This simple line from a book has taught me that life and school isn't about how much money you make or how good your grades are, it's all about making lifelong friendships and finding out who you are as a person. I have to thank every one of my classmates for helping me learn this.

So, without further ado, let's get those diplomas!

~Natalie Wallace  
Co-Valedictorian

