

VDS 8th Grade Graduation 2020

Address to the Class

To the Vermont Day School Class of 2020:

Last week, at our all school, end of the year assembly, you, our 8th grade graduates, were asked to give advice to our younger students at Vermont Day School. One piece of advice that I heard a few of you offer, was about the importance of asking questions. While there was a lot of valuable advice shared that day, the importance of asking questions resonated with me for many reasons.

Think Critically. Work Collaboratively. Make Good Choices. Ask Questions.

This is a key tenement of Vermont Day School's Mission. Asking questions requires confidence and courage to speak up, to think out of the box, or perhaps just to admit that you are not in the know. Questions have driven your learning during your time at Vermont Day School. As a class, you have worked hard and worked together to find answers and solutions to many open ended questions.

Asking questions during this unique time period seems more important than ever. You are graduating 8th grade and entering high school during an unprecedented time in history, a time when there seems to be more questions than answers. Your curiosity and inquisitiveness will fuel dialogue, action and innovation to address challenges that we currently face as a society.

Just as you offered advice to your fellow schoolmates for their future years at Vermont Day School, I offer you this piece of advice for the next chapters in your lives. Continue to ask questions. And be sure to listen to the answers. For this is how you will continue to see things from multiple

perspectives, to strengthen your understanding and compassion, and to promote the change you want to see in the world.

Each of you will be spreading your wings as you take this next step from our small, nurturing environment to much larger learning communities. It may feel daunting and scary, but hopefully exciting too, and I assure you, that you are ready.

Champlain Valley Union High School, Rice Memorial High School and South High are lucky to have you. We know that you are bound for great things in your high school years and beyond.

Always remember your roots. Please know that you are and will forever be part of Vermont Day School's family. We are so proud of each and every one of you, and you will always have the distinction of being Vermont Day School's inaugural class of graduates. This is an honor that you have earned.

Please know that there are many other family members, Vermont Day School Board Members, Teachers and Staff, who are not physically here today, but are certainly with us in spirit and sending their well wishes for your next step. From all the Faculty, Staff and Board Members at Vermont Day School, congratulations on your 8th grade graduation.