

June 21, 2013

Greetings to President Garland, members of the Board of Education, faculty, staff, parents, family, alumni,

Tonight we are here to celebrate the commencement of the 65<sup>th</sup> graduating class of Coxsackie-Athens Central Schools.

### TURN TO SENIORS

Seniors:

If you were to search the Internet (which some of you may be doing right now on your mobile devices to pass the time) for samples of graduation speeches, you will find lots of old,... supposedly important adults pontificating advice to the students. Tonight I will avoid that practice, (though my kids may say I'm old and as far as being important, well my wife reminds me I'm not really that important) and instead share advice from those who are wise beyond their years, have had worldly experiences, and lastly who are not afraid to speak their minds.

I am of course.... describing our kindergartners here at C-A.

So here is their advice:

- Be persistent
- Don't throw a fit when you're really, really mad. Take a deep breath.
- If someone asks you to be their partner, Don't turn away. Say, yes.
- Ask people to be your friend.
- Stay kind
- Participate

- Don't comment on the way other people look.
- When you are working on something important, don't stop until it's done.
- Don't cheat.
- Eat healthy and drink a lot of milk and water.
- Try to get some sleep.
- Don't smoke
- Don't text and drive.
- Use a tissue.

Another reason I asked this year's kindergarteners to give advice, is your class happened to be the first at C-A to experience full day kindergarten. Based on your performance, the evidence is clear, full day kindergarten works!

Your class represents the highest percentage of students to graduate from C-A in many, many, years. You have achieved success in the classroom, in the athletic arena and on the stage. You have won ribbons, medals, awards, scholarships, and championships. And this year we can add state champion as well. Congratulations, Mike.

The experiences you have had at C-A has prepared you to commence your next stage of life. And..... along with the wonderful words of advice from the kids who will follow in your footsteps 12 years from now, you are ready. And here is a list of the occupations you listed and are ready to enter:

Accounting
Agriculture,
Animal Behavior, Ecology, Conservation
Animal Science
Audio Production
Baking and Pastry Arts
Bio-Chemistry
zoology
Pre Med
Biology-Clinical
Biology-Marine
Business
Business Admin
Business Mang
Chemistry
Computer Information Systems
Computer Science
Construction
Cosmetology
Criminal Justice
Culinary Arts
Dental Hygiene
Education
military
Engineering-Aeronautical

Engineering-Chemical
Engineering-Computer
Engineering-Mechanical
Entrepreneurship & Innovation
Fine Arts
Game Design
Graphic Communications
Human Services
Journalism
Law Studies
Liberal Arts
Literature
Management, Hotel, Resort and Tourism
Mental Health Counseling
Musical Theatre
Nursing
Occupational Therapy
Pharmacy
Physical Therapy
Physicians Assistant
Physics
Psychology
Radiology
Semi-conductors
Social Work
work

And the perfectly ok occupation...for now.... of undecided.

That list represents your aspirations and I am confident each of you are capable of achieving them.

So My own advice?....

Instead of seeing things as they are and say why, dream things that never were and say why not.

Always keep learning, always keep smiling.

.... make sure to eat healthy and drink lots of milk and water.

It will be my pleasure... from this day forward.... to call each of you

Coxsackie-Athens Central School Graduate.

Congratulations.