

This is how I define a successful person: Someone who works hard, cares about those around them, and stays true to oneself. I refuse to define success by the things we cannot control, but rather, by things we can. Working hard, caring for and about those around you, and staying true to yourself all are within your own power to achieve.

Of course, that is easier said than done. As you know, the many things you cannot control can sometimes stand in the way of your idea or thoughts on what being a successful person is. But to me, it is not just the destination of your dreams that defines your success, it can be found in the journey itself.

Over the years, you have learned many things in your academic classes, but I must admit that some of the most valuable lessons I have learned have come from practicing athletics, and observing the arts. Observing, because I am not an artist by any stretch of the imagination. But what we learn from these disciplines is that failure is essential to improvement. And I must admit that that is a huge relief for a guy like me.

What we learn from athletes and from artists is that when they learn a new drill or piece, they have not perfected their skills from the start. But they practice and they practice, rehearse and rehearse, and despite their constant failure upon failure they are unwilling to give up, and insist on getting it right. And when the task is harder, we fail even more and longer. But the reward of getting it right in the end makes the journey all worthwhile.

When we chase after our dreams and things get challenging I am always reminded that some of the best views often come after the hardest climb. Knowing where you are headed will certainly help you

obtain direction in your journey, but the path may still be rocky. Keep taking pleasure in your journey, even the difficult moments, as they will define your character, and your success. Will you continue to work hard, continue to care for those around you, and will you continue to stay true to yourself? If you do, then to me, you are successful.

Work hard to overcome the difficulties over, and over again, until you get it right, and care for others no matter your own circumstances. Because sometimes others may need help on their journey just as you may have benefited from some help from those surrounding you. Be sure to thank those who support you along the way. For your success in reaching this milestone of high school graduation,

I'd like to thank the many members of our clerical, cafeteria, maintenance, and other support staff who worked tirelessly to keep things running smoothly and fix them when we needed it to work.

I would also like to thank and acknowledge our district leadership. Superintendent Dr. Harner, our Board of Directors, and our entire administrative team. Your teachers and counselors, who dedicate their lives to your continued growth and success.

And to the families of this excellent Class – Thank you! Your support has been critical in the achievement of this milestone in the lives of the young people sitting here today.

Students, I see in you a group of individuals with immense potential. So, while you find yourselves at the start of a new mountain to climb, the question is, what are you going to do? Will you take on the challenge? By being here you have shown the capacity to do so. And as you keep climbing you will continue to acquire the skills that enable you to be resilient and adaptable to anything that comes your way.

It is my hope that we have instilled in you a desire to grow in character - that we have made just a small contribution in your journey to becoming a person who is unwilling to give up when they fail. A person who will always work hard, care about those around you and build strong relationships, and that you stay true to who you are. That you dedicate yourself to becoming just a little better every day, and that you start taking pleasure - not in the destination alone - but in the journey itself. views.

Use moments such as tonight to seek out new opportunities. Ones you may not succeed at right away, but ones that allow you to stay true to yourself. In doing so you will make a difference in the lives of others, and in the world around you; we will have achieved our mission as a school, and you will be successful and as you climb your mountain, you will see some of the most breathtaking views.