

Good afternoon teachers, fellow graduates, family and friends. I stand in front of you today, having the honour to deliver a speech on behalf of the graduating class of 2010.

Crestwood is a place that offers the chance to take advantage of all aspects of life, not just education. Although the professional teachers here are amazing at teaching and giving lectures, they are also here for moral support, life lessons and just right out there to make sure you have the best experience here possible. For them, it's more than just a job. For example, when anyone of us misses an English class, Ms. Macfarlane or Ms. McCourt are always happy for the student to come in and get the work that we did not get when we were absent. This example just shows how involved and dedicated our teachers are to make sure we realize our potential in both this school and life.

While the faculty encourages students to do well, we also rely upon each other to push ourselves ahead. Whether it's a contest between two friends to see who gets the highest mark, or who is the first to answer a question in math class, we've always had healthy competition in this graduating class.

I've got a little story to tell you all. I came from a very small elementary school in Thornhill. I had spent all my primary years at this school. For various reasons, including having huge class sizes, my parents decided to send me to Crestwood. At first, I was sad. I was so attached to a school that seemed like the best in the world, and now I had to leave. I had my mind set

that this was going to be just another one of those richy private schools where all they care about is grades. I arrived on orientation day, for grade 7 with this in mind. I can honestly say I have never had such a quick change of mind with anything in my life. The atmosphere of the school just blew me away! With the size of the school, and all its classrooms, lockers, big gym etc. I was just taken over by the Crestwood spirit. As I sat in the gym, not knowing anyone except for two kids (who had not shown up yet) I heard the words of the great and only, Mr. Pagano; I knew this was the school for me. From the passion and excitement I heard in his voice, I knew this wasn't just another school. This was the school. As the day went on, my feelings towards Crestwood just went straight up. And at the end of the day, I knew this was going to be the school that would have a huge impact on my life. I was not wrong. To this day I believe that this is the school that changed my life. Not only did this school help me improve my grades, write speeches, and add angles, it also developed me as a person.

So hopefully by now, everyone has noticed, grade 8 is over and high school is right down the road. While I know everyone is excited to have grade 7 and 8 behind them some may be saddened as I am. To think of that first day of grade 7 and where we are now is astonishing. Memories will follow us, and continue to be made as we move on into high school. One of the best memories of grade 8 was definitely the trip. We spent about 3 days in Ottawa and had a remarkable time. From doing tours of museums and art galleries to watching the teachers dance at the ski lodge, it was an absolute highlight of the year. With so many great memories of that trip, this is the best one... it's four words. "Outside Mountain Climbing Club". Lead by no other teacher than Mr. Ferley, all the graduates decided to climb up a ski hill

like little kids. As high as the hill was, the reward was far better than the effort we put into it. As we got to the top we could see the rolling country hills and farms in a beautiful falling sun. A memory that will stay with this graduating class forever.

Another great memory involves the zoo trip in grade 7. This trip was organized so that students could get to know each other, bond and make new friends. And even though the zoo was about as smelly and dirty as the boys change room after a rugby practice, the plan worked. Many friends were made and connections were completed.

Also, memories have been made right here in Crestwood. Whether it was Mrs. O'Reilly giving sharp, sarcastic answers to students asking not so smart questions or Mr. Ferley, with his back to the board, tossing, but failing to land the smart board marker into its holder.

Even though students realize their learning potential, and thanks to the marvelous teachers here, there is more to this school than academics. Because of all the extra curricular activities, Crestwood has given me a home to mature and enrich myself as a person. Memories held by me and a lot of my close friends are those from the under 14 hockey team. Even though we were not the most skilled team in the division, we kept our spirits high and let that carry us through the season. Led by the very excellent coaching of Mr. Ferley and the very enthusiastic and mother like coaching from Ms. Skiba, the hockey team finished in 5th place. Which for all of you who were on the team last year, is an amazing improvement. Because of Crestwood I have had the opportunity to become a leader; a young adult

with poise and confidence. And I know many of my fellow classmates have had this opportunity as well. As well, from the very active clubs to the assemblies about drunk driving and charity needs I have found a new level of patience and a greater desire to do what is right.

My fellow grads, from me to you. Live every single part of your life to the fullest. Experience every part of life; doing this will make you a joyful, wise and successful person in the future. Crestwood has given us so much knowledge and understanding of the world and what lies ahead.

Fellow graduates, Crestwood is one important step on the ladder that will take you far in life. Thank you!