

2018 Valedictorian and Salutatorian Words of Wisdom

We gathered our 49 valedictorians and salutatorians for a celebratory lunch on Tuesday, May 22, and one of the things we asked them to do was provide their words of wisdom for incoming freshman. Here's what they had to say:

- Put your enthusiasm into everything you do.
- Don't procrastinate and enjoy every high school memory - make it last.
- Build good relationships with your teachers.
- Get involved in things outside of the classroom.
- Start building your scholarship and college application portfolios early - you have no time your senior year.
- Respect everyone, no matter what differences you might have with them.
- Be in clubs you actually like to do so it's not a chore. Participation looks good to colleges, so you want to be in ones you enjoy.
- Participate in things you believe in.
- Try new things because it's a good time to explore.
- Be nice and appreciate what your teachers do for you.
- Don't make excuses and own your mistakes.
- Always participate in class, even if you don't know the answer - it's ok to make mistakes.
- Find a support group to help you through the good and the bad.
- Don't sweat the small stuff and don't stress about things you can't control.
- Take care of yourself; hydration is important, folks!
- Be nice to your mom.
- Don't always necessarily rely on others to get things done for you.
- Be proactive and don't put things off - don't procrastinate.
- A schedule is the best friend you're going to have.
- Be kind and loving.
- Climb to the top...because there are no escalators.
- Don't slack off first semester because your GPA does matter that first semester.
- Make good friends and healthy friendships.
- Find something you like to do to take your mind off of the stress.
- Take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way because you don't know where it will lead.
- Do what you love. Don't give up on something you like because it's hard, and don't do something you don't like just because it's easy.
- Don't be a loner, find your people - they'll be your friends for life.
- It's not about grades, it's about who you are when nobody else is watching.
- Challenge yourself, but don't overload yourself with responsibilities.
- Find something you're passionate about and go with it.
- Have school spirit, be true to yourself, and find a good group of friends - that makes high school really fun.
- Try to branch out your freshman year and meet people who don't seem similar to you.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Don't be afraid to do things that may terrify you.

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- Always stand up for yourself and self-advocate.
- Believe it or not, your teachers want you to succeed.
- Don't work 30-plus hours per week, 20 is probably fine.
- Kindness and hard work will take you further than you can get by yourself.
- Don't procrastinate. But we all do, so find something productive to do while you're procrastinating!
- Always be in search of new perspectives and don't forget to volunteer.
- Build good study habits your freshman year so you can fall back on them when you get "senioritis" your senior year.
- It's important to be part of something you love with people you love.
- Don't take out your stress and how you feel about your problems on the people who care about you the most.