

Fellow classmates, it is such an honor to be up here speaking to you as we are all together one last time. For the occasion, I'd like to share one of my favorite songs. This song is sung by the 2009 American Idol winner, Kris Allen and is entitled "Live Like We're Dying." In it, he sings that there are 86,400 seconds in a day. Now I have done some math and out of those, about 25,200 of them are spent in school each day. Over the four years of high school this equates to about 18,144,000 seconds, which is 302,400 minutes, or 5,040 hours. That is quite some time to be spent in one place! As Kris Allen implies, it is your choice how that time is spent. High school is only as good as you make it. It was our choice if we wanted to enjoy the time, and everything it encompassed or, if we wanted to throw it all away.

Personally, I decided to enjoy my time in high school, and I'd like to reflect on those years. We began as little freshman walking through the halls, with people who seemed to be so much older, bigger, and smarter than us. We watched the seniors vote in the 2016 presidential election and couldn't imagine that ever being us. Then, sophomore year arrived, and I think we were all just honestly glad we were no longer freshman. We saw an end to keystone testing, and a beginning to driving. As juniors we looked forward to our first taste of being upperclassmen. While we could not wait for prom, and college visits, we neglected to realize the true horror behind the SATs and the challenging classes, but somehow, we muddled through. As everyone knows, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

Finally, we hit the year that we've been told of since kindergarten, but never seemed like it'd actually come: 2019, our graduation year. We were finally the older, bigger (well some of us), and smarter seniors the freshman looked up to. Although we all may have experienced some bumps, setbacks, and losses along the way, I think I speak for everyone when I say that,

overall, this year has truly been an amazing one. It all began in the fall, with the last, first football game of our high school careers. It was a beautiful Friday night, in which the football team earned their first win in almost two years, with the constant cheers from the cheerleaders, pep songs from the band, and roars of the student section. This set the tone for a great year ahead. As we left the fall and our first semester of senior year behind, we approached the winter season. The idea of graduating, and leaving the high school became truly manageable. Not only did we survive the dreadful Pennsylvania winter, we thrived. We had several regional band qualifiers, two state chorus members, district swimmers, state wrestlers, one even being a place winner, and not to mention a District 6 Basketball title. As great as it was, this season too had to end, and we became one season closer to graduation. We ultimately hit spring: the lasts of the lasts. The last musical, concert, meet, game. The last prom. Everything hit at once, and with the ending of our favorite events, came the growing senioritis. As we got closer to our final day, the longer each day seemed to last. But here we are. We made it through with our own hard work, help from our teachers, motivation from our friends, and support of our families. Although none of us liked waking up at 7 o'clock every morning or studying for multiple finals, if we are truly honest, I think everyone will miss high school a little bit. After all it was the place where you might have found your niche, your people, or even yourself. As Kris Allen's song continues, "You never know a good thing until its gone."

With that, as our high school "song" comes to an end, a new "song" begins. Congratulations class of 2019. You get to choose how that new song is sung. I encourage you to pick a tune and sing it well!