

Good evening graduates, parents, administrators and colleagues.

It is my pleasure and honor to be here to share this evening with you, the class of 2021.

When you arrived at Conval in the Fall of 2017 I knew that I would be ending my career as you were graduating. It has been a fun four years and over that time I have enjoyed having many of you in class. For all of us we will close one chapter of our lives and move to another one with excitement and anticipation for what the future holds for us. You starting your careers and me ending mine and looking forward to family time, fun times doing the activities that I enjoy and time to travel.

As I look back on 44 years in education as a teacher and a coach I especially remember the students I taught and coached and the educators I worked with. The people and the relationships have been a key part of this journey for me.

I encourage you to embrace the friends you make and the relationships you develop as you move through life.

As Maya Angelou wrote:

‘People will forget what you said

People will forget what you did

But people will never forget how you made them feel’

When I started teaching, in 1977, I used chalk and a blackboard and my students used pen and paper. How life has changed – now we all have laptops or chrome books. And in the last 15 months we adopted and adapted to a new educational environment with fully remote, to hybrid and then back into the building for many of you. As Miss McKillop reminded us ‘we can do hard things’ And we did.

I encourage you to embrace change and the hard things in life. Take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves along the way. You will learn and grow from all those experiences.

Lastly, I encourage you to find what makes you happy.

I have truly loved coming to school every day.

Find what makes you passionate.

I have always felt a passion for health and wellness and have a passion to share that with others.

When you enjoy what you do it does not feel like a job

‘Do what you love and love what you do’

There is so much in life that you still have to discover and I am excited for you as you start that discovery.

Never stop learning. Never stop questioning. Never stop challenging yourself.

I will end with a quote from Winnie the Pooh:

‘You are braver than you believe’  
Stronger than you seem  
And smarter than you think’

I wish you all the very best in life.

Congratulations to you, the class of 2021.