

Chelsea Lavallee: “The future holds endless possibilities for us”

Hi, everyone. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Chelsea Lavallee and I'm the class Salutatorian.

And for those of you who do know me, I'm sorry that you have to listen to me talk more than I already do. This year contained numerous last firsts for us all. The last first day of high school, for example, or the last first football game of the season. Luckily though, there will be many more firsts for us to experience in the years to come.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

This year we all underwent a big change with the consolidation, yet in the end we pulled through it and came out stronger and more united than ever before. However, this was not an easy task, and our determination to make the best out of a tough situation should not go unnoticed or unacknowledged. I hope I speak for everyone when I say that we did a pretty great job of coming together as one. We as students and as people progressed so much from the start of the year. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have met new people who I've learned so much from, and for the opportunity to accept change with an open mind. This year we made not only new friends, but new memories that will last us a lifetime.

The end of high school doesn't have to mean the end of these friendships, though. While we may lose touch with certain people over time, those who play a significant role in our lives right now will always be there, whether we're sitting next to them in a class next year or if we're hundreds of miles away. Distance does not change anything. In fact, it has the potential to make our bonds even stronger. It puts things into perspective and allows us to appreciate the little things. It makes us not take our time with anyone for

granted. And before you know it, everyone will be right back here in our little state over the summer or on breaks, like they never even left.

While we're away at college, though, it's crucial to stay true to ourselves and not lose sight of what's important to us. Be individual, unique, and passionate. Don't be afraid to stand out. Be proud of who you are and of your accomplishments, and don't let anyone make you feel like you're not worth it, because you are. So accept these new beginnings with open arms.

The road has been long and definitely not easy, but hopefully it has been rewarding for everyone. We deserve everything the future has to offer for us. And speaking of the future, keep one thing in mind: We are the future. We are the next generation to shape this society. The world is fragile right now and needs people like us to rebuild it. We are capable of so much more than we realize and all have the potential for greatness.

It seems like just yesterday we walked into Pilgrim for the first time, getting lost in the hallways that we now know like the backs of our hands. They say that high school goes by in the blink of an eye, and we never believe them. We think that high school is never going to end and it seems like we'll be here forever. But suddenly, here we are today.

And as excited as we all were (and still are) to begin a new chapter of our lives, it's now so much harder to leave this all behind. We've been saying for months that this day couldn't come fast enough, and now that it's here we wish we could press rewind. It's crazy to believe that we're actually graduating. But we are, and as difficult as it is to say goodbye, or should I say, goodbye for now, the time has come. So as our journey through high school comes to a close, keep in mind that we have so much ahead of us, and

remember all of the wonderful memories we have shared. The future holds endless possibilities for us.

So after tonight as we part ways, look not at the future with fear but with hope. Hope of success, hope of joy, and most of all, hope of all that is possible if you set your mind to it.

Thank you.