

*Erin Sabat*

To begin, I would first like to extend a tremendous thank you to the administrative staff, faculty, parents, siblings, guests, and most importantly to my fellow classmates, as it is an honor to be able to speak to you today. A day that we are all able to come together and celebrate our individual accomplishments in a sort of grandiose, flashy way that only happens maybe a couple times in a lifetime. I mean truly, how many more days will you have the entirety of your family be happy that you completed something that hundreds of other kids also did? Just kidding, graduating high school is a phenomenal accomplishment, and I am so proud of all of you for working hard and making it here. Together, we have experienced a lot before arriving at our graduation day-- whether it be freshman year where the juul rooms were still called bathrooms, sophomore year where you could say we "won the merge", junior year where we stressed harder than ever academically and personally, or senior year where we made national news for a poorly constructed lunch policy. Although sometimes untraditional, it is moments and memories like these that made my high school experience unique and something I will never forget. On my first day I walked into Pilgrim High School as a timid girl from a catholic middle school, wearing a bright pink floral dress, accompanied with a patterned Vera Bradley backpack, knowing absolutely nobody in my classes and certainly looking very out of place. Regardless, I am so happy to now know most of you in our graduating class of 2019-- a class with an unparalleled fighting spirit, endless talent, and limitless potential for success. Even though I might be the one up here delivering this speech due to doing well academically, each and every one of you sitting in front of me have your own individual, amazing talents and abilities, so many of which I couldn't even dream of excelling in. Whether it be attending college, enrolling in a trade school, entering the workforce, joining the military, or the like, I know with immeasurable certainty that

*2022-2023*

the future of this class will be one of a substantial positive impact on the world around us. From the bottom of my heart, thank you all for continually inspiring me and those around you to strive for the best and to never settle for less. We have never sat quiet through times of injustice-- the outspokenness of our class about discrepancies regarding the quality of our education is something I'll forever be proud of. I'll always remember the immense amount of passion and power that lies within this class, and I cannot wait to see the magnificent things all of you accomplish in the future. However, if there's one message I could leave you all with today, it is one that I have tried to internalize daily throughout my high school career-- to not miss the moment. With our current society, it is so easy to become fixated on the future, as I'm sure all of you have already experienced pressure regarding your future career or financing your education, as if you were supposed to have it all figured out. But I am here to share with you that this isn't the case-- live in the present, and the future will come. Truly experience memories as you make them, live every moment completely immersed in your surroundings. A perfect example is our graduation here today-- look around, look to the person on your right and to your left and appreciate this moment while you have it, as a moment such as this one will never really happen again. Life is made up of moments that are meant to be enjoyed and remembered--so, I ask as we all head into one of the most exciting chapters of our lives, that we truly live it to its full capacity. But most importantly, make sure to take the time to thank someone who has pushed you or motivated you to reach where you are today. As for me, I want to take this moment to thank my mom and dad, so thank you for always guiding me and encouraging me to give my all in everything I do. But, I'd also like to thank all of my former teachers. The teachers of this school are truly what make this school unlike any other--every teacher I have had has been

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extremely supportive in all my endeavors. As a daughter of a teacher, you all deserve much more credit than you receive, and I just wanted to take this moment to acknowledge the true greatness that exists within the walls of Pilgrim High School, so thank you all so much. With that, I'd like to conclude my speech here today with a quote from one of my favorite musicals-- "Forget regret or life is yours to miss. No other path, no other way, no day but today." Thank you.