



Address to OBHS Class of 2018

Dr. Laura Seinfeld

Good afternoon. I am truly honored to stand before all of you, members of the Board of Education, proud parents, grandparents, family members and friends, teachers, support staff and fellow administrators, and most importantly, you, the OBHS graduating class of 2018.

Students, you may not have noticed, but I have been watching you. I have been observing you, and other Oyster Bay-East Norwich students, current and past, and I have made what I consider to be a very important observation. In every single instance, every single instance, of walking through the doors of OBHS over my ten years serving this amazing District, a student has held the door to the building open for me, and for others. Sometimes I am at the bottom of the driveway and I signal the student not to wait for me, but not once has that door NOT been held open. This is not just for me, as I have watched you do so for each other and for adults entering the building. This has become a little

assessment, a bit of data collection that I have done quietly over these years, and have not shared publically until now. I cannot calculate the number of times I have walked into this beautiful building, but I can calculate the percentage of times, 100%, that I have seen you, the students, making the choice to be kind and hold that door open for others, even if it delayed you just a bit. Students, I have bragged about you to my family and friends, and to colleagues. I have often wondered if any other superintendent could make a similar claim about the students in his or her district.

This mini research study has served as a reminder of what a warm, nurturing, and kind learning community we have here at OBHS and across the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Central School District. You, the members of the class of 2018, have learned to treat others with such kindness. You have learned this from your peers and from those who have come before you, the nurturing adults in your lives. This includes your proud parents, families, and friends, many who are here today to celebrate this incredible milestone your high school graduation. I ask you to reflect upon all of the individuals in your lives who have

modelled such respect and this type of care to others. I know you have been watching them, just as I have been watching you.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have also been so fortunate to have had educators who have also served as your role models. I thank and honor our instructional staff for their tireless efforts in planning meaningful learning experiences for all of our students. Our staff has not just taught you content, but they too have taught you how to treat others. From sitting with your peers on the rug in your kindergarten classroom at TR to your transition to becoming almost teens at Vernon, to your growth into young adulthood here at OBHS, to proudly joining you at the prom on Thursday and to this beautiful ceremony today, your teachers, counselors, support staff, administrators, advisors, and coaches have guided you and reminded you how to treat others, and this guidance serves you well outside of the school setting, as you embark upon your bright futures. Our educators have opened doors of learning to you and for that, I extend my deepest thanks to all of them.

To this amazing class of 2018, similar to how you have opened those doors for us, I know our district has opened doors for you. You

have been provided with opportunities for deep and meaningful learning within and beyond the classroom. You have impressed us in your classwork, college acceptances and future planning. You have inspired us on the stage, on the field, and in your service to others. Doors to amazing colleges, careers, the military ... to your future, have been opened for you in the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Central School District. And now, we stand aside and give you a gentle nudge to push you through that door to your bright future.

As you walk through the door to the next chapter of your life, please do not forget to turn around and thank those on the other side, as they deserve your deepest gratitude. Thank your families, thank your teachers, and thank your peers for all the support, guidance, and friendship they have provided, as they have helped you in your preparation to walk through that door. Also, please never forget that the doors to our District and community remain wide open to you, and we encourage you to come back and share your beautiful futures and accomplishments with us. As you walk through that door, on whatever path you choose, please remember to always work hard and follow your

passions. Lastly, I ask you to always choose kind and continue to hold doors open for others. Thank you.