

I have to be honest with all of you; I struggled to write this speech. As I reflected on my years in Quakertown, I felt an infinite number of emotions that I could not possibly put into words. However, one thing remained clear; I have been shaped by this community and no distance will ever change that.

As we move on into the next chapter in our lives, whether that is joining the workforce, attending college, or serving our country, we will always hold onto the seemingly minuscule aspects of Quakertown. Unfortunately, that also means that we will all hold impossible standards for the future football games we attend because our school spirit was unmatched.

Pascal Mercier once wrote, "We leave something of ourselves behind when we leave a place, we stay there, even though we go away." While it is difficult to accept that the first chapter of our journey has come to an end, it is beautiful to realize how strongly we have impacted each other's lives. As you look around yourself, you will see some classmates with whom you have only had a few interactions. While it may seem like you will forget each other after you both receive your diplomas and leave this school behind, that is far from the truth. The reality is that this period of our lives is the most crucial to developing into who we become as adults. The human brain is not fully developed until the age of 25; this means that every conversation we've had- from the mundane small talk we made in between classes with an acquaintance to the existential discussions we had during those car rides with our best friends- will influence the parent, employee, spouse, and overall person we will become. Whether or not you remember each conversation you've had from your first day of kindergarten to your last day of senior year, they have all led you to become who you are in this exact moment. For that reason, I want to thank every single teacher in this district for molding us into the adults we will leave here as. You have shaped the future generation and the wisdom you've passed on to us will allow us to change the world. To the families and friends here tonight, you have led your graduate through some of the most challenging years of their lives; your love has allowed them to begin their next chapter with confidence in knowing that they have support. And finally, thank you to the Class of 2022 for impacting my life in a way that no one ever will. Every single one of you has persevered through the multitude of unique obstacles that have been put in front of us throughout our academic careers. You each have your own individual skills that will stand out among the rest. Take pride in knowing that you can make an impact on this world just as John Mayer said, "One day our generation. Is gonna rule the population". While this may be a frightening realization, I truly believe the world will be in good hands.

Wherever we go and whoever we become, we can always find peace in the fact that we will remain a part of this community. I look forward to watching you all achieve your dreams; they are closer than you think.