



To the graduating class of 20___, congratulations! You did it! You worked hard. You survived over 13 years of school. Congrats! Way to go!

Parents, in just a minute, I am going to give you the okay to make a lot of noise and celebrate your students. I know we can't always do this at the graduation ceremonies, so this will be your time to make some noise. On the count of three, you have every permission to make a lot of noise. You can yell out their names. You can call them their nickname. This is your time to publicly go crazy for your kids. 1, 2, and 3. (wait for noise) That felt good, right? Congrats again to the class of 20___.

[Leader Note: Share some funny anecdotes about graduation ceremonies you have attended. Here's what I shared...]

By the way, I loved hearing the nicknames of the students during this time. I was at a graduation event last year and the parents had signs that read, "Go Junebug!" What a cool name! I wanted to meet him just to have the opportunity to meet Junebug. Another parent at the graduation yelled, "We love you, Pop-Tart!" Pop-Tart? How do you get that nickname? How many Pop-Tarts do you have to eat to get that name? And the final name I heard yelled was Pork Chop. What a great name, Pork Chop!

I am so glad that we had the opportunity to yell and celebrate our students today. I understand that at the ceremonies we can't yell and scream because we need to save time. A few years ago, I saw someone's 95-year-old grandma pull out an airhorn and blast it when they said a name. Security was called, but when they saw how old she was, they didn't say a word to her. So, if you are going to blare an airhorn, let your grandma do it! They won't touch her!]

When I think of my high school days, there are a lot of things that come to mind. I think of the Friday night football games. I think of all the good friends and the great memories. I think of some great teachers who believed in me. And sometimes when I am feeling nostalgic, I will grab for my good old school yearbook which I happen to have here today.

[Leader Note: if you have a yearbook, pull it out. If possible, show a picture of yourself from your yearbook.]

I can't wait until you all get a little older and you get the opportunity to look back in your yearbook. You will ask questions like, "What was I wearing?", "I dated who?", and "Where is that one popular guy who said he would be a millionaire?" If you don't mind, I would very much like to look in my yearbook and share with you some great quotes written by my friends in high school. These are things written in my yearbook.

[Leader Note: Find your own yearbook and use your own quotes. The point of this is to provide humor in your talk. I made funny comments on some of the quotes.]

- K.I.T.—Keep in touch.
- S.S.S—stay so sweet
- I am the first to sign your crack (there was always that guy who wrote in the crack of the book)
- Take care because I care (aw, how sweet!)
- Chris n Jenny=love forever (pretty sure they broke up right after graduation)
- Good Luck in the future with all of the girls (well, ya know..)
- Don't ever change (really, don't ever change. So, me as a senior, that's as good as it gets?)
- Wish I could have known you better, but you seem like a really great person---(why did you even sign my yearbook?)
- HAGS (Have a good summer! AKA, you didn't know me at all)
- If you need anything, call me anytime. (It would be so fun to call and ask for something right now. Matter of fact, she left her number, let me call her right now)
- Don't forget me.

Over and over in my yearbook people wrote, "Don't forget me." It is a major theme. Don't forget me. And to be honest, I don't remember some of them. They wanted me to remember but I forgot.

Here is my encouragement and challenge to you today. You may forget some of the people from high school. You may forget some of the places you used to hang. Let me challenge you never to forget where you came