

Hello, my name is Lexi Torrez. I would like to thank (board) and Mr. Finley for making such a unique schooling environment possible.

The late educator and civil rights activist, Dorothy Height has a quote that I think we all can agree applies to us. "Greatness is not measured by what a man or woman accomplishes, but by the opposition he or she has overcome to reach his goals." To get to this point we have had to endure thirteen years of schooling, countless firsts, puberty, and all of the rest of the joys that go along with growing up. We've all had to overcome difficult times that have even made us question who we are, but despite all of those tribulations we have made it here to the finish line.

As we leave here today we leave behind 17 or 18 years full of lessons and things to reflect on as we take our first steps as adults in the real world. We can finally forget that the mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell and the quadratic formula. We can all look back at the times when we stayed up until two in the morning finishing a module and always be reminded of the evil that is procrastination, when we suffered through our ten page *Into The Wild* papers which forced us to look beyond the text, and unforgettable nights like our first eAcademy prom when we danced the night away and maybe ate a bit too much candy.

From here we get to take charge of our learning and our future and decide where we want to take the knowledge that we have fostered up to this monumental point. This is the moment when we become our own way finders. Whether that be to far off places, a university to strengthen our knowledge, or to just finally relax.

We deserve to take a deep breath and revel in our accomplishments. We really did it. We wrote, solved, thought, and quizzed our way to this stage where we will walk across and mark the first moments of our freedom. All of the things we've experienced and learned have led us here, now it is up to us to use that and become successful, contributing citizens of this world. So now take a moment to think of the people that supported you through this journey and encouraged you to give it your all. I would like to give a special thank you to Ms.Rehage for helping me work beyond my limits and grow so much as an English writer, Ms.Craw for helping me find my way here and for believing in me when even I didn't, and finally, my family for never letting me doubt myself and for helping me grow into a better, stronger person. My final wish for each and every one of you is that you'll be happy and fulfilled wherever life takes you next. Congratulations, we made it.