

## Graduation Speech Guidelines for 8<sup>th</sup> Graders

Graduation is a time to celebrate you. Giving a speech is a rite of passage and it is your “last hoorah” as a middle schooler. Families and community members look forward to hearing these speeches and your stories and reflections. Here are some general guidelines for writing your 8th grade graduation speech:

### **What to say (prompts for inspiration):**

- Appreciate those who have helped you.
- Recall special or favorite memories of middle school. Recall a challenge that helped you grow.
- Tell about special achievements and/or milestones you have reached in middle school.
- Explain how you have grown over the past two years. How have you changed? Matured? What would you do differently?
- Acknowledge people or events that have been important to you.
- What are some of your hopes for the future?
- What have you learned from your friends? Your teachers? Your involvement in sports or extracurricular activities?
- If you’re having trouble describing yourself or your growth, what do you think your advisor, teachers or friends would say?

### **What not to say:**

- Political, religious, or “off color” jokes or comments
- Slang
- Negative comments or sarcastic remarks

### **The specifics:**

- Your speech should be between 250-400 words long (or 30 seconds and 1 minute in speaking time).
- Your speech should have a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- All speeches will be reviewed by a teacher for appropriateness and depth of content. You will have to continue to make revisions until your speech is deemed acceptable.
- At graduation, you will have your speech notes with you to look at, but you should have practiced beforehand so you do not read staring at the page.
  - Look at the audience.
  - Speak clearly and slowly, enunciating your words
  - Breathe
- Practice, practice, practice!