

Baccalaureate Speech by Rob Hyde

May 15, 2010

Hello. It seems like everything has gone by in a flash doesn't it? It seems like yesterday we were outside playing wall ball in the kindergarten circle and flag football on the soccer field. It seems like yesterday we were walking down the halls in single file line. Everything that I remember and we remember from our time at St. George's has flown by so quickly. Once I got in high school I realized that these 14 years have been the best years of my entire life. I know that that only leaves four years out that I probably can't even remember anyways because I was so young, but if you stop and take a second to look back, you'll realize that all of the work and struggle that we went through together was awesome.

When you stop and remember the things that we have done on our journey you might have thought about the saying, "everything you need to know you learn in kindergarten." If this is true, then why did we have to go to school for another 12 years???

It just doesn't make sense, until you remember all of the things that this school has taught us. When you look back over these 14 years, you might remember way back in kindergarten when we played on the apple computers and built blocks. Or when we stained eggs with coke to see how bad it was for our teeth. You might also remember senior kindergarten with Mrs. Finney.

Now I know that everyone knows Mrs. Finney pulls teeth out and that she drives around at 8'o clock every night with a ladder to see if everyone is in bed, but you might also remember that she doesn't tie shoes on Thursdays and she will make you walk the fence for just about anything, well... maybe that was just for me. You might also remember second grade with Mrs. Hamer and Mrs. Williams on the trip downtown, or that dinosaur game we played on the apple computers every day or D.E.A.R time (Drop Everything and Read). In third grade, Mr. Innocent John Christian Williams was responsible for my first and last behavioral slip. "John, do you remember talking during the prayer before lunch? Yea... Yea... well I hope that strike to your stomach did some permanent damage because I got a behavior slip for that."

If you think about it, you might remember the fourth grade Tennessee play when I got to dance with Kailen Hughes. That was the first time we actually touched girls.

You might remember all of the awesome trips that we took, like our first overnight trip to Reelfoot Lake; even though we had to make a journal, it was still really fun. Or the best trip of all, the Cumberland Caverns where we got to sleep in the same cave as girls.

Middle school was a whole different story. We got a whole new group of kids in our grade. Middle school was weird because everyone was awkward and creepy. We had just learned the reproductive system the year before in fifth grade, and most everybody had already gotten “the talk” from their parents. So basically anything that anybody said was funny in some sort of sexual or creepy way. I think that middle school was good, however. We really discovered who we were. Everyone found the sport that they were good at, which classes were hard for them, and which teachers were tough. Our teachers in middle school were some of my favorite teachers. I remember thinking that I didn’t have a bad teacher all of those years.

I can remember going to Team Trek and Tremont in middle school. All of the trips and class events really drew us in as a class. We also came together when our classmate Ali Mills passed away in seventh grade from cancer. That was something that was very hard for seventh grade kids to deal with. Ali was one of those people who was always in a good mood. You just had to smile when you were with her. She changed my life, and I know that she changed so many others. It’s just incredible to think about how one thirteen-year-old girl impacted so many people’s lives in such a short amount of time. It makes you think about how much she could have done if she was with us through high school. The celebration of her life brought our grade together more than anything.

Once high school hit, we pretty much had our set class. We had seen a lot of people come and go but now it was mostly the class of 2010 as we know it now. Upper school has been a fun ride. We had several state championships, all-state athletes, and academic all stars. Most of us have jumped in the frigid waters of Jake Lake for the polar plunge. We all bonded at Team Trek and learned what 100% responsibility was.

In tenth grade, my grand-parents passed away. I was very upset about this and didn’t know what to do. Thankfully I had friends like Robert Heard and other guys and girls who helped me through this hard time. Not only did I have support from my friends, but the school understood my family’s grief just the same. Mr. Culley and my teachers helped me with my make-up work, and I had many faculty members like Mr. Gorham support me during this rough time as well.

This is what makes St. George's such a great place. It's not just the school that looks like a ski lodge or the good food or the computers. It's the people that make up the school that makes it so special. It makes me wonder where we would all be today if we hadn't gone to St. George's or if the high school didn't open. This school has meant so much to me and all of my classmates. It really is like a second family to me. I am so very thankful for this school and the class of 2010. I am always going to remember these days and the 14 years that I have been here.

Now I understand why we had to go to school after we learned everything that we needed to know in kindergarten. It's because we had to learn how to be honest, dependable, and respectful. It's so that we would grow up to have a tight knit class and 84 best friends: the Class of 2010.