

Graduation Speech – Christian Cañete, Class of 2018 Salutatorian

Good morning everyone! My name is Christian Cañete, the Class of 2018's salutatorian. We did it! We have finally made it to the day we have all been dreaming of ever since kindergarten, and we couldn't have done this without all the help and support we have received throughout the years.

First and foremost, I would like to thank all our wonderful families and parents who have done everything for us. Thank you to my mom and dad for never giving up on me and always supporting me even though I know I can be occasionally annoying, stubborn, or uncooperative. Thank you both for always being the people I talk to, cry to, and laugh with during the most difficult and stressful times. Thank you to my sister, for always being there when I needed a friend, at school or home, and when I needed a pencil. Thank you to Lagreat, my great grandmother, for always taking care care of me and for teaching me ever since I was born. I am grateful for all my family members for giving me constant support in everything I do.

Secondly, our phenomenal teachers and staff! These are the people that have guided us, helped us, and educated us for at least 38 hours a week. Thank you so much Ms Escobar and Mr McGovern for caring so much about your students' education and well-being. Thank you so much for all your help and support in preparing us for high school. And thank you for putting up with me when I would cry about getting an A-. You have been amazing educators to us for these past two years and both of you will have a very special place in my heart. You guys will always be the reason why my time here was so memorable and enjoyable.

Thank you Ms Anna for enlightening me about the world and teaching me in a way that kept me engaged and interested. Thank you Ms Elena for teaching us to always be creative in and out of

class and I will always remember the times when I was part of the art team. Thank you Coach T for teaching me that exercise can be fun and showing us that communication and teamwork is a vital element in life. Thank you Ms Sam for being both an amazing educator with ingenious teaching methods and a great supporter. You have made our class very fun and enjoyable and I have always looked forward to Tuesday and Friday because of you. Thank you so much Mrs Essalat and Mr R for doing so much for the school! Your guidance and leadership has helped all of us be the amazing students and people we all are.

Thank you to Sister Anne, Sister Annette, Father Charlie, and Father Francis for keeping my faith in God alive and for teaching me about how I can be as wonderful as Jesus. And thank you to the MDA staff, past and present, especially Mr Francisco, Mr Ward, Ms Ivana and Ms Cat! You all have made my last school year here the most exciting and incredible year I have ever experienced because of all your hardwork and dedication towards us. To the MDA staff, thank you all for everything you have done for my class, and I will always have memories of each of you to look back at and reminisce.

Lastly, my classmates, and most importantly my friends! I love and thank each and every one of you for your loyalty, advice, and guidance. Everyone of you has supported me in a very special way that I will never forget. And I would like to acknowledge someone very important, Janine. Thank you Janine. You have always inspired me to become better as a student and as a friend and I am truly honored to be sharing this spotlight with you. I will never forget the times we were partners and all the amazing creations we made with our two minds working as one. And I'll always remember you as my favorite partner in League of Legends. To all my friends and classmates, your positive messages will always be remembered when I'm down. I will also remember the times you all helped me stay on track the nights where we would stay up together

and keep each other company while doing homework and the crazy, why-is-this-funny moments we always have. I will miss all this, and certainly all of you.

We have gone through so much this school year, but unfortunately we have to let go. We now have to leave our comfort zone and elementary school, and move onto the next era of our lives, high school! Thanks to our amazing teachers, all of us are going to amazing high schools where we'll each thrive and evolve. These next four years will be tough for all of us, no doubt, but thanks to MDA we are prepared and ready to conquer any challenge we might face in high school and in the real world. I'm so proud of everyone here, and I wish you all the best of luck for highschool and beyond.

Finally, I want all of you, especially the students of MDA, to know something very important: speak up! Never stay quiet, and everyone here who knows me knows I rarely do. There's a special quote I like to remember, "You get in life what you have the courage you ask for," by Oprah Winfrey. Never be scared to advocate for yourself; put yourself and your ideas out there! If you want to be known, speak! If you want to be respected, speak! If you want to learn, speak! I believe in each and every one of you here, you all have so much to give the world. Your future is in front of you, make it the best!

Thank you!