

# **Banning High School Commencement Speeches**

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## **Class Salutatorian Emeizni Mandagi**

*Banning High School salutatorian Emeizni Mandagi's commencement address, as it was submitted to the Record Gazette:*

Good evening, Class of 2014!

At this moment, I want everyone to take a moment to think about the best memory you've made in high school.

What memories did you think about? I'm going to take a wild guess and say that it consisted of a moment with your closest friends or loved ones-- moments when you were in the company of individuals who had the power to brighten your day with their mere presence. Now as harsh as this may sound, all of these memories will eventually become erased by the hands of time. You will cease to remember the names of some of your closest friends in high school and most of the memories that you made. And honestly, it's inevitable. People get caught up with life's fast pace and tend to worry too much about the future. And as much as it's important to plan for the future, it's just as important to cherish the memories that you make. High school is a brief period in our lives that will never happen again. Maybe it hasn't hit you yet but, after this moment, it will all be over. You may never cross paths with the majority of your classmates again. High school, once a huge part of what your life revolved around, will be reduced to a mere memory. Everything in life is temporary, even your memories. Yet, that's what makes a memory so unique-- the fact that a single moment will never happen in the exact same way. It makes us hold them even closer to our hearts and hold the people who we love even closer.

I want to emphasize to all of you to take advantage of your youth. Fully experience every single day you are blessed with! Seize your youth before it breaks from your grasp, and don't forget to cherish every moment. Erase your doubts and fears. You are competent enough to achieve your most outlandish dreams. There is no need to feel incompetent. Because let me tell you, even the person sitting next to you has felt incompetent at some point in his or her life. You are not alone. You can either succumb to your fear of failure or choose to rise against it and perform at your fullest potential. Muster up the courage to fight your fears. I believe in every single one of you.

These memories that we made together these past few years molded us into the people we are today, and I truly do hope that you don't forget them. I, for one, will always hold these memories close to my heart. So thank you, Class of 2014, for all of the wonderful, unforgettable memories. There is no doubt in my mind that each and every one of you can lead a life of success and happiness. Just remember that success is not measured by your wealth and fame. The happiest people in life are not always the wealthiest. Instead, success is measured by the positive impact you leave on others. I wish all of you the best of luck on your future endeavors!

Congratulations, Class of 2014!