

To the Senior Class of 2020,

I've thought a lot about each of you and the impact that the coronavirus pandemic has had on the Class of 2020. I know how much you, your family and friends were looking forward to the cherished moments of your senior year. I share in your disappointment—we were going to write the last chapter together—your graduation and my retirement. You are a very special class to me—you transited from middle school to the high school the same time I transitioned to superintendent. I feel like I have gotten to know so many of you and that we shared many memorable moments.

Not only do we have the past together but we are making history together—we are experiencing first-hand the social, economic and political impact of COVID-19. We've learned how to be flexible and resilient because we never know what life might throw our way—we've learned how to become more involved in our communities—we've learned how to become more motivated and productive—we've learned to think globally. We've encountered defeats, but in the end, I believe the pandemic has helped us to learn about our character and resolve—it has made us all stronger.

The famous poet Maya Angelou once said, "you may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it."

There is wisdom in these words. Life is not endless pleasant experiences. Adversity helps us to learn about our character and our resolve—how we respond becomes our testimony.

I'll leave you with these words of inspiration from Dr. Seuss who says, *You're off to great places. Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so . . . get on your way!!*

I'm very thankful for the Class of 2020 and for each bright and smiling face. Please know that I believe in each of you. And, don't forget—you will always be a Husky!

Phyllis Yates
Superintendent