Greetings from Ron Kowalchuk, Board of Education Member of Living Sky Board of Education.

Congratulations Grads.

Well Grads I have to begin my remarks to you today with a heavy heart. This is a Graduation Year that we all will remember as disappointing because we all could not get together to celebrate this Milestone in your lives. Grads, in the over 30 years of graduation speeches I have done this is one that is the hardest for me because I truly love being with the graduation classes and I truly miss being there with you this year. But I assure you that my Heart and Spirit is with you today and I am putting all my Love, Hopes and Wishes with each and everyone of you today and everyday as you go on with your lives as you go out into the world in search of your fame and fortune.

Well Grads, you did it. You all accomplished one of the major early milestones of your lives. High School Graduation. This is a major step in the journey of your lives, one that should be recognized for its immense significance. It is an act not only of your personal commitment, but also one of pride. You all worked hard to get to this day, and your work did not go to waste. A High School diploma is a wonderful tool in this world, one that opens many doors of opportunity for anyone who is lucky enough to have one.

Grads as you stand here on the precipice of the future. It’s not a distant reality anymore. It begins here. It begins today.

You began high school as children, but you’re leaving here as adults. You’ve completed a basic education that will serve as the platform you use to launch yourself into your futures. Some of you will go on to University, College or Vocational/Technical School, others will go straight into work force, but each of you will travel your own path.

No matter where you go or what you do, there are challenges ahead of you. What I’m asking from each of you, is to meet those challenges straight on with your head held high and your heart wide open. It is not enough to simply try to get by in life. That doesn’t move the world forward. You must try to excel in everything you do. Strive for excellence in every task, large or small.

Although it may not be easy to see, every accomplishment you achieve is added to the world’s accomplishments. Your individual successes benefit society as a whole because when you succeed, you lighten the load on your fellow man. When you succeed, you are in a position to give rather than take.

Imagine if every individual lived up to his or her own potential. Think how amazing that would be, and how much better off the world would be. Now imagine if just one half or even one quarter of those individuals lived up to their potential. The world would still be an awesome place, they could still make some amazing contributions to society.

Well you may not have the power to inspire the entire world to strive for success, but you do have the power to try to achieve it for yourself. My challenge to each of you is to do all that you can do to reach your full potential. If all of the students in this graduating class is able to do that, just imagine the effect it would have. The future is truly in your hands, so make the most of it.

So, on behalf of the Living Sky Board of Education and Staff, my wife, Beverly and I want to congratulate you on your accomplishments.

Enjoy your Graduation as best as you can and look forward to all the Great Opportunities that lie ahead of you.

Thank you and God Bless.