

## Presentation Day Assembly 2023 – address by Amor Alahmad

“Think outside the box. Vote for Amor because she rocks.” Those were the last few words I said at the end of my very last speech here at Granville East Public School as a Year 6 student.

Good Morning Teachers, Students, and my cherished primary school community,

I'm here today, not only as someone who graduated high-school this year or even just as someone who was once in your shoes, but as a student who was once proudly the school captain of this school in 2017. 2017 seems so long ago but as I look back on the journey from then to now, I can't help but be grateful for the experiences and how they have shaped me. I was invited back today to share some of those experiences to you all still studying here and specifically the year 6 students who are preparing to bid farewell to one chapter and embark on the next exciting journey that is high school.

When I look back on my journey from being School Captain here at GEPS to reaching the end of Year 12, I have always been grateful for the unwavering support and guidance I received from my teachers and staff at this school. It set the foundation for my education, and yet what stuck with me throughout the journey was what I learnt about leadership, compassion, and resilience, shaping who I've become today. Graduating Year 12 represented both an achievement and a starting point. It's the end of a chapter and the beginning of a new one. However, the road to Year 12 wasn't always easy. I've faced many challenges and celebrated some wins, each one shaping me in different ways. There were moments of self-doubt, academic pressures, and personal challenges. But through perseverance and the support of my teachers, family, and peers, I learned the art of resilience. Each challenge became a stepping stone, guiding me towards growth and strengthening my determination to succeed. Despite the hardships I endured, along came success and achievements.

I remember a few weeks before my HSC Trial Exams, I felt a sense of nervousness and a tinge of anxiety, and I know of course that it is completely normal to feel that way leading up to an exam but something in me wanted to just give up. Looking back, I thought to myself that I am a fighter and I had come so far and it was not worth it to just give up now. So, after blaming myself, what did I do? I hopped on TikTok and began scrolling. Apparently all I needed was a “break” but it happened to be my 5th break in 10 minutes but we just ignore that for now. I came across this one particular video with a quote that truly opened my eyes which was (and I actually have it here with me. It was) “A dream is not what you see in sleep. A dream is something which doesn't let you sleep”. What made it funnier was that the quote was on a surgical glove. So, what did I end up doing? I printed it and stuck it to my desk from that day onwards.

In High School, I met this one girl I had been friends with since Year 7 and a few weeks before our HSC Exams, we decided to write on a piece of paper what we think our estimated mark was for each other, and so we did that. That piece of paper was kept in our pencil case and we both made a promise not to look at it until the day our ATAR is released, which is this Thursday (cross your fingers). By making this promise with each other, we were determined to work to the best of our ability and try our absolute best no matter what the outcome was.

On December the 5th 2018 of Year 7, we were given a piece of paper titled “A message to my Future APHS Self”. There were a few questions to answer in relation to our future predictions and wishes. I had come across a very specific question which asked me about my predictions and wishes for my future Arthur Phillip High School Self. My response to the question was “In 2024, I want to go to University and hope to become a Paramedic when I'm older. I have always dreamed of becoming a Paramedic”, and still to this day, my thoughts have not changed. Funny thing is that I am a very indecisive person and it amazed me how at such a young age, I have been determined to continue to chase that dream. I want to be a Paramedic because I dig the idea of being the superhero who swoops in to help when things get intense. Plus, I'm all about making a real impact and being part of a team that saves the day. I just love making a difference.

Now, enough about me. To the 2023 Year 6 students, I want to share a few words from someone who was in your shoes not long ago. Remember that the journey doesn't end with Year 6. Embrace every opportunity you get and enjoy every single moment because before I knew it, I was up on stage collecting my Higher School Certificate and it had passed within a blink of an eye. High School will be a rollercoaster ride, with ups and downs, but each experience will shape you into the amazing individuals you are destined to become. Cherish every friendship and never underestimate your potential. During High School, you will meet a lot of new people along the way and go through many friendships. Remember that not everything will go your way and that is ok! Hardships are part of the journey. High school brings new adventures, new challenges, and opportunities to continue growing. As my mum used to say, you are the big kids of the school right now but once you step foot into High school, you are babies once again. I remember the first day of Year 7 was like a rollercoaster of emotions. Stepping into the school gates felt like entering an entirely new world. I was always worried about who would become my friends and how I would fit in. Year 6, believe in your potential and never be afraid to chase your dreams. As I look at each one of you here today, I see future leaders, artists, scientists, and change-makers. You have the power to shape the world around you for the better. Keep learning, growing, and most importantly, stay true to yourselves.

Thank you for allowing me to share these words with you today. Remember, this school will always be a part of your story, and the experiences you gain here will help guide you on your incredible journey ahead. Before I finish, I leave you with a quote "One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen can change the world"

Amor Alahmad, aged 18.

12/12/23