

Dr. Joseph Jabbra

Your Excellencies

Esteemed MPs

Mr. Hani Aboul Jabine, Chair of the Board of Governors

Mr Paul High, Chair of QuIET

Trustees, Governors, Honourable Guests, Parents, Teachers and Friends

Welcome to the BHS 145th Speech Day.

Dear Graduates, Congratulations! Let us take a moment to thank those who helped get you here: your parents, teachers, friends and of course your grandparents. Special thanks are also due to the entire BHS staff, the Parents Association, and the Old Scholars Association for all their efforts and contributions to the growth of BHS.

17 years ago, I joined Brummana High School and have been enchanted by its magic ever since. Reflecting on those years, I can say with a great deal of confidence that a lot has been accomplished; yet a lot more remains to be achieved. We aim for our graduates to be trilingual individuals who possess the right attitude and skills needed to succeed, while leading a life of service wherever they are. This made it imperative that we looked at ways to enrich, enhance and improve the academic programme. Thus BHS became a Cambridge Examinations Centre authorised to teach Cambridge IGCSE courses and was accredited by both the North American organisation AdvancED and the British organisation Education Development Trust. To crown all this, we were recognized as an IB World School two years ago; in fact, there are IB diploma graduands for the first time among this

year's graduates. We added French language to our curriculum all the way from KG to Grade 12 and introduced e-books and on-line readings.

Any successful academic programme requires having both the right staff and the physical facilities to deliver such a programme. This resulted in our teachers attending professional workshops related to the subjects they teach, both locally and abroad. The campus is now fiber-optics networked, allowing students to have internet access throughout the school. A new building for KG II and KG III was constructed, with a substantial increase in parking spaces, in addition to the full renovation of Rizkallah Building, the swimming pool, the kitchen and the library which now houses many digital resources.

Assessing the effectiveness of staff professional development and improvements in the curriculum warrants verification by an objective body, so we ask our students to sit for external exams such as the Cambridge IGCSE, the DELF French exam, the ACER Australian exam in maths and English and of course the Brevet and Lebanese Baccalaureate. They have done extremely well in all these exams. In addition, they continue to top awards in local fairs and academic competitions in maths, science, writing, arts and sports.

In keeping with the school's mission, we introduced several activities to serve the community, in fact we were the first school in Lebanon to have community service

a graduation requirement. So we organized and hosted spring professional development workshops for teachers in the area, hosted World Scholar's Cup and BHS MUN, and produced four major plays as well as having arts exhibitions. All these accomplishments were accompanied by opportunities to develop and nurture the character of our students. You participated in the BHS Walkathon to raise funds for worthy causes, had weekly visits to Dar Al Awlad, Dar Al Rahme and Amal Institute, won sports tournaments, produced Speakout and Yearbook, elected a Students' Council, organized International Day and Founders' Day, and put tremendous hours into serving the community. Your success stories and character developments had the dual effect of having more families than we can accommodate seeking BHS education for their children and colleges and universities issuing admission certificates with merit scholarships to our graduates. We succeeded, and the keyword here is "we", because BHS has been blessed by a talented board of governors, supportive parents, dedicated staff members, successful old scholars and good students.

Dear Graduates,

You are well prepared to continue your life journey. Remember, "God created man in his image" does not apply only to you, but to any other human being, so exercise your humanity and appreciate the sacredness of your fellow human being.