

Commissioner Julie Brill  
Columbia High School Hall of Fame Ceremony  
June 1, 2012  
The Five Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me In High School

Good morning,

3. What you put on Facebook may still be there in thirty years.

Thirty years ago, a Tweet was a sound a bird made, the Cloud was something up in the sky, 4G was a parking spot, Applications were what you sent to colleges, and skype was a typo. I don't have to tell all of you how fast technology is changing today. You are digital natives, with more tech savvy in just one of your digits than I have in my entire body. But while there are a lot of cool apps and programs out there, it's important to keep in mind how to use them wisely.

Back when I was in high school, our teachers and parents told us "don't do anything stupid". Back then, it meant: Don't drink and drive; don't do drugs. And that is still important. But there are others way you can hurt your future. High school is a time to be social. But all of you are working hard to graduate, go to college and pursue your dreams. Be as aware of your online reputation as you are of your reputation here in these halls. Don't hurt your chances for your dream college or that great job because you mistakenly put a bad picture up on Facebook.

4. It's not always about winning. It's how you play the game.

I'm a huge sports fan. And yes, winning is important. But how you play the game is equally important. Leading a life of integrity and being a person of character really is part of leading the good life. You want to be remembered for your character, not just for coming out on top.

Part of leading the good life is to find ways to help people. Look around you and you'll discover problems that need fixing. Whether it is helping at a food kitchen, developing a cure to cancer, or finding a way to connect kids in Africa to learning centers here in the US, focus on helping others. You will be much more likely to do well by doing good, and in the meantime, you will have helped people who really need the help.

5. Keep yourself ready to answer the call from the President.

There are some times when you really need to answer the phone. And when it's the President on the other line asking to appoint you to a position, that's definitely a call you want to be in a position to take.

Okay, it may not be the President on the other end. But at some point, you will be called on to serve others: your family, your neighborhood, your school, your community, or maybe your country. Answer that call. But most importantly, prepare for that call. Make yourself the best person you can be, and then you'll be ready to answer it. And you'll be in a great position to do good for others.