

## Alexandria School Board Installation Remarks

June 29, 2009

I want to thank everyone for coming this afternoon. I appreciate the confidence so many of you have in me. I am grateful for the opportunity you have given me to serve. Your presence here shows your dedication to making a difference in the lives of our students.

I especially thank my wife, Nancy, and my very own student advisory group -- Jack, Ford, and Bridget. It would not be possible to serve on the School Board without your support.

As we begin this new Board, the school division is on the right track. Dr. Sherman has the passion and the energy, and, with the Board, has already made exciting changes. I believe we are at the beginning of a period that will be hailed as a new era of excellence for every student.

Last week's graduation was my first as a Board member. It truly was inspiring. Students from all backgrounds and literally from across the globe paraded proudly in front of us to receive their diplomas. In fact, on Saturday at the Del Ray Music festival, I met one of those graduates, Abe. He told me that he had earlier that day played his trumpet at the festival and that he is going to attend Yale in Fall.

How can we get all our students to this moment of achievement? What is our obligation to them, whether they go to Yale or NOVA, or become a carpenter or an artist?

We must provide a "continuum of care". Although this is a phrase that is most associated with the medical profession, it is particularly apt for us. We must be responsible for all of our children from pre-K through graduation and take a systemic approach to their education. Asking what each child needs to reach his or her potential and then providing it is not just good medicine, it is good education.

For the next three years, I ask that we as a Board rededicate ourselves to this mission of helping every child reach his or her potential. Excellence is always worth it and our students deserve nothing less.

Thank you.