



The Attorney-General of NSW & Minister for Justice, Mr John Hatzistergos

We are here tonight to wish the Year 6 Class of 2009 every success for their move to Senior Schooling. We commend their teachers for the excellent work done to prepare them for this important next step. We especially acknowledge the work of the Year 6 teachers Mrs Marinos, Mrs Tsokas, Mr Dookie, Mr Arnott, Mrs Ierokles, and Miss Argyrou.

Congratulations on being good role models for younger students, through the Year 6 Leadership and Buddy Program.

We commend our Junior School Captains Christos Raptis and Victoria Tsingos, the Prefects and indeed all Year 6 students, for presenting themselves, their families and their College with dignity and proper pride.

The hard work done by Mrs. Hamer, your parents and your teachers over the years Father Steven, the Parish President – Dr Savoulis, the Chairman of the Board, Mr Phillips, the members of the Board and Parish, demonstrate the deep affection and regard that this school community has for its children. Today Dion Alexander said to me: “We are being treated like celebrities...” and my answer to him was that to us you are celebrities.

As part of the Getting to Know You program you had the opportunity to spend a day at the Senior School. You met the teachers and had the chance to experience some of the programs and expectations of the next stage of your schooling. We hope this will help you to settle in quickly next year. Every beginning is difficult we say in Greek. «Κάθε αρχή και δύσκολη». Tonight we invite you to embrace the difficulties and challenges that come with your move to Senior School.

On this wonderful evening when you step up to senior schooling, we remind you that here at St Spyridon above all else we endeavor to instill in you a proper pride in your religion and heritage. We believe that the Junior School lays a sound foundation in your appreciation and admiration of a culture that has inspired the world over its 5000 year history. Never forget that as custodians of this rich and astounding civilization you have been given both a privilege and a heavy responsibility. Either you keep the Hellenic flame alight for the future, or you will be the last generation who has been warmed and enlightened by its glow. You know who you are-never compromise your identity. If you do not respect yourself first, you can respect no one else.

Remember that in a new place you can prepare your own welcome through your own conduct. Show interest and kindness to others, and you will find that they will show interest and kindness to you. Get involved in activities you and you will soon feel as if you belong. Take every opportunity to experience and to get involved in all that Senior School life has to offer you. Make new friends among the new students joining the Year 7 class of 2010 from other schools. Their emotions at this time are more intense than yours, as they leave behind everything that is familiar to them.

To our parents we say congratulations for having such fine children. Thank you for supporting the ethos, values and standards of our College. This strengthened our capacity to influence your children and to impart to them the parameters of a life of faith, discipline and compassion. We wish you all joy as you watch your children take their place in the world.

How moving was it for Mrs Hamer and the rest of us to see so many young mothers and fathers come to this morning's award assembly! How lucky are our children to have parents who share so enthusiastically in their memorable moments! This was not the case when I was growing up. Our parents were often new to this country, which was not always as friendly or as laid-back as we like to think it was. Many of them had to work long hours, in thankless and difficult tasks-to give their children a chance for a better life. In the person of all the grandparents who are here tonight, we salute you and your generation. We consider ourselves and our children lucky to have had you as our role models.

In leaving the Junior School today, my dear Year 6 students you take with you your grandparents' and ancestors' excellent example of faith and resilience. We can give you nothing better to inspire you on your journey to Senior School. Thank you.



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