

Good evening,

I would just like to start by welcoming everyone to the 2014 Reception for Scholarship students. Congratulations to the parents and students whom we are acknowledging tonight, and I wish you the best in all of your endeavours.

Here at St. Andrew's, unlike other schools, we are geared more towards ensuring that the students become well-rounded individuals. Don't get me wrong, we appreciate academics and we are successful in sports- you can just ask Mr. Wilson; however, there is more to life than just academics and sports. We have an extensive extra-curricular program that gives students the opportunity to be a part of something larger than themselves- whether it be Red Cross, Charity Water, or Operation Smile. As Albert Einstein once said, "try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value." You may be able to cite every single mathematics law that exists, but if you don't know how to interact with others, and how to bring across your ideas effectively, what good is that knowledge in a practical sense? This is why we build character and foster healthy work environments that would serve to prepare students for life in the real world.

In years 12 and 13 especially, and I strongly encourage you to stay for Year 13, you learn not only how things work, but why they work, as the odds are at least three of your classes are interconnected at some level.... or at least you think they are ... it may all just be an illusion ... maybe you're not in class at all...oh the wonders of the Theory of Knowledge or TOK as we coined it. As Aristotle once stated, "It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." While the mention of TOK makes some students groan inwardly, I personally enjoy it, because it teaches you about other cultures and encourages you to be open-minded, respectful, caring, communicators. I'm sure these words are sounding familiar to all of the students in the room. What are they a part of? That's right, our IB learner profile !

I know I'm obviously a biased source, but St. Andrew's is considered one of THE best schools in the Bahamas for a reason. Believe me. It's true. This is partly due to our amazing faculty members and partly due to our determined students. One of the strong points of St. Andrew's, in my opinion, is the strong sense of community and the notion that you are not alone, which is very important for students making the transition to a new school. I know my experience is limited to these past few years, but based on stories told by my peers, if one is confused about an assignment, one needs only to ask the teacher for clarification. Or, if one is confused about a certain concept, one needs only to ask one of the students who are strong in that area, and that's the way it has been for quite some time. Ms. Preston is a shining example of this, especially for IB HL Chemistry students, because she is always there to give you that little "push" in the right direction whenever you are utterly stymied by a new concept. I could stand here and talk about all of the great qualities that our teachers possess, but in the interest of time, I'll just summarize it all into four frank words: they are all exceptional; and no, I'm not just saying that because they're in the audience right now. I know I probably sound like a realtor or a 'used car' salesman giving you 'the spiel', but I am just extremely proud of our school's

achievements and immensely grateful for having been afforded the opportunity to attend this great institution. I know that whatever I endeavor to do, and I'm sure Sherman concurs, the skills and knowledge that I have amassed at this school will be highly beneficial in other aspects of my life.

I would just like to leave you with this:

A non- IB teacher says to a non- IB student: "Write your name on this folder sheet."

The student replies: "Okay, this is easy! "

Now an IB Teacher says to an IB student: "Write your name on this folder sheet."

The student replies: "Okay, but how big exactly? Which corner? What font should I use? Cursive or print? Do we write our full middle name or just our middle initial?"

Once again, welcome to the St. Andrew's family !