



Good evening Mr Shezi, our deputy principals, Mrs Moodley and Mr Singh, our Grade Head, Mrs Madurai, our honourable guest speaker, Mr Sweet, our dedicated educators, proud parents and last but certainly not least, my fellow classmates - the Matric Class of 2026.

Standing before you this evening is Phiwokuhle Zungu, and I am deeply honoured to deliver this speech today, for the last time as the RCL President of 2026.

Looking back at where it all began, I am in awe of how far I have come, from being the shy grade 8 girl who walked around the school with her head down, sometimes even forgetting how to walk. Yes - that is how shy I was. I would be lying if I said leadership was something I never imagined or wished for, it has always been an experience I desired, from primary till now but I just never seemed to have enough confidence in myself and belief in the fact that I was deserving of that title. But fortunately for me, that did not matter because you all had confidence in me, you all believed in me and you all saw something in me that was difficult for me to embrace. You made it a reality and pushed me to embracing it to my fullest potential.

But today is not about me, nor is this speech. Today is to acknowledge and recognise how far we have come and how much further we can go in this final chapter to success.

Last night, at our Sports Awards, I had the privilege of delivering a reading of the school's sports creed. The creed spoke about integrity, about playing fair even when no one is watching and about choosing character over victory. Preparing for that reading sparked deeper thought for my speech this evening.

For 5 years four words have been imprinted in us, Compassion, Commitment, Integrity and Respect. Words that have been easy to overlook but have held so much depth, so much meaning and importance in shaping us all to be the young ladies and gentlemen we are today. These four words have been on our walls, in our assemblies, and in our memory for years. This year as RCL President, I finally understood what they mean in practice.

Integrity taught me that leadership is not about being liked, it is about being trusted. Respect taught me to listen to a Grade 8 learner's concern as attentively as I would listen to a teacher's instruction. Compassion taught me that sometimes a learner doesn't need a code of conduct, they need someone to understand, someone to just be there. And commitment taught me that serving this school means showing up, even when you are tired, and even when you have your own things to tend to.

Being RCL President has not always been glamorous. My badge has fallen off more times than I can count, and I have spent more time than I would like to admit- telling learners to go to their area. Not to mention the numerous crash outs and even tears along the way. But it has been the greatest honour of my school career to serve you

all because it taught me that true leadership is a service. It is an even bigger honour to have gained the experience

To our teachers, thank you. On behalf of every learner in this hall, thank you for your commitment. Thank you for the extra lessons, the endless marking, the patience even through our madness and shenanigans and thank you for believing in us even on the days we made it very difficult to do so.

To our parents, thank you for your sacrifices, all the fees paid, the contributions to excursions, and lunch. Thank you for your unwavering support and endless prayers. Every certificate awarded tonight belongs to you as well.

Most importantly, to the prize winners, matrices of 2026, my second family - congratulations. You have earned this honour through hard work and dedication. You have shown us what happens when our four values are put into action. But our final chapter is still being written, we have one last hurdle ahead. Our final exams. I know we are tired, and I know the pressure is real. But we have been preparing for this for twelve years. It would be a shame to let that down the drain in the last 7 weeks. Let us finish with the same honour that we started with. Let us give it our best, not for the marks alone, but to honour the journey, our parents, and ourselves.

As we take the final step to the closing of this chapter let us remember, the world does not need more people chasing honours. It needs more people living with honour. The main essence of our school motto, Honour before Honours. And if we continue to carry that motto along with the values of Integrity, Respect, Compassion and Commitment out of this hall and into the world, then we will have truly made our school and parents proud.

It has been my deepest and greatest honour to serve as your RCL President this year. Thank you.

Phiwokuhle Zungu
RCL President 2026