Head Boys’ Speech 2014 Opening Assembly

Good afternoon staff, students and parents of Rathkeale collage. It is my privilege to be addressing you today as the Head Boy for 2014. This year will no doubt be a challenging year for me as I try to play my part to help lead the school in a positive direction. This is no doubt my biggest leadership opportunity so far and I hope to make the most of the opportunity I have been given. Although Josh, my older brother, set a huge footprint in the path of Rathkeale College as the Head Boy last year, I want to stress the fact today that I will have my own style of leadership and I will work to leave my ‘own’ footprint in the path of Rathkeale College.

I am at ease knowing that I am not alone in this quest. Behind me are a unique group of boys who will form a Prefects team who will complete their roles with the utmost passion. I say this with some confidence as the prefect camp last week cemented for me that the boys are really committed to serving the school. I feel challenged by the goals we have set and where we want the school to head in 2014. We have a number of initiatives and these will soon be apparent. I hope they work well to enhance the school for future years.

It is intended this year that prefects will have a designated area of responsibility. The emphasis will be for prefects to work as part of a team in at least two areas of responsibility. Non-prefects will also be invited to form part of these teams and indeed some already have competition and boarding house responsibilities.

I invite the following to come forward to receive their Prefects’ badges.

- Dougal Ross Deputy Head Boy and Head of Academic
- Jock Cudmore Head of Day Boys and involved with Service
- Hugh Morrison-Thomas Head of Culture and Head of Service
- Cory Olsen Head of Sport and involved with the Student Forum
- Sam Tufuga Head of Chapel and involved with Sport

We have also been working with some of the boys not named as prefects and we hope to with others as well. For the boys in the school who were not named a Prefect this year, I urge you to continue making a difference in our school, in your own unique way. Your efforts are equally important.

I have no doubt this year will be busy for me, but no more than it will be for many of you. You will find at times things are getting too much and everything seems to just pile up. If this happens, relax and then reflect. Ask yourself are you spending your time wisely? Wisely does not include checking Facebook or completing the last level of detail. Prioritize your events and manage your time so deadlines can be reached. Hopefully, you can thank me for that advice later...

Your academic performance will set you up for later life. We all know that as a factual statement but some of us choose to ignore it. My suggestion is: don’t ignore it. Think of school like this: If you are in an English class at the start of the year and Mr. Anderson is yarning about a word called megalomania - listen and take note! If you don’t and you are thinking of something else you essentially miss a block in the foundation of your learning. It may seem insignificant but trying to build a good understanding of something from an unstable foundation will cause problems later on down the line. So listen and take note.

For the boys in the room sitting NCEA, I cannot stress how important it is to switch on from the get go. Start off the year saying “I will get these credits” and aim high. If you fall short while aiming high, you are still near your goal, just not as close as you would have hoped for.
If you aim low and fall short you will almost certainly fail and then you won't have much to fall on.

Most importantly enjoy the year ahead of you boys. Take opportunities with both hands and give it your all in this place. You are only here once so make the most of it. Believe me when I say time flies because in this place it does. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you actually need it because the teachers, other boys and prefects will give you a hand.
I will leave you with a quote from Jim Rohn:

“Let others lead small lives, but not you. Let others argue over small things, but not you. Let others cry over small hurts, but not you. Let others leave their future in someone else’s hands, but not you.”

Thank you
Luke McKay
Head Boy 2014