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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Text Of Dr. Baker's Graduation Speech

SPRINGBORO, Ohio - Thank you president (Emily) Geib, president (Diane) Trifiro, honored guests. First of all, let me say congratulations to all the graduates, your family and friends who have come here today to honor your accomplishments. I know you are all eagerly looking forward to getting your diplomas to make this official, so I will be brief

I have two pieces of advice. Pay attention because there will be a quiz following:

I know each and every one of you want to be successful. You want to have a great career, a beautiful home, and a loving spouse and perhaps even a family.

It was easy to decide how to be successful in high school. You knew to do your homework, study for tests, be respectful of others, and get home at the allotted time to make your parents happy so that you wouldn't get grounded. You repeated this basic procedure for the last 37 weeks, and look at you – here you are graduating, many of you with honors.

So you are graduating high school. Now what? College? Junior College? Tech School? Maybe you have not chosen a major field of study or have chosen one but are not sure it is the one for you. **Advice number one**...Seek out and find a teacher, professor, or person who is passionate about their subject or career. It does not matter what they are passionate about, just that they are.

Find that person who has that passion and take their course, listen to why they are passionate, that information will open doors for you. That passion will be contagious.

Some of you are going into the military. Can you stand so that we can honor you?

Some of you may be taking a year off before going to school, or maybe want to try your hand at the work force. You will find out long before your classmates this important fact – there is no curriculum, no courses of study in life. It's like having an entire lifetime of elective courses. While there will be many folks along the way that want to help you, the "electives" you choose will stay with you for your entire life. Understand you are going to make some bad choices – we all do. Sometimes it is hard to understand, but these bad choices often shape our lives more than our good ones – and yet they all are helpful.

You can increase your odds of succeeding in life by realizing another important fact. **Advice number two– never stop learning**. I am not talking about life lessons here. While they are important and will also increase your chances of being successful, you must decide now that

you will never be satisfied with the skills you currently possess. To be successful in the world you will live in, you must do everything to make yourself irreplaceable.

Make certain you have the skills now and in the future so that no boss will want to lose you, no other employee from here or any other country will take your job. When technologies, skills, and needs change, make certain when the boss says who can meet this new challenge, yours is the name they think of first.

Here's something for you to ponder. According to former Secretary of Education Richard Riley, the top 10 jobs that will be in demand in the year 2010 didn't exist in 2004, using technologies that haven't yet been invented, in order to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet. Will you be prepared to handle that challenge for your employer?

The days are gone when people graduated from high school or college, and then spent the next 30 to 40 years working for the same company. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that today's learner in school will have 10-14 jobs by the time they are 38! The bottom line is – if you are not willing to change, to be a part of our global economy, someone else – maybe even from another country – will want to rise up and meet that challenge. Are you aware that if every job in the United States was sent to China, they would still have a labor surplus? Do you realize that if you count only the top 25% smartest kids in China, that number is greater than all the kids in North America?

Do you realize that new technical information is doubling every two years? This means as a student in a technical college or college, half of what you learn your freshman year will be outdated by your junior year.

As your superintendent and more importantly, as an educator, I want each of you to succeed past your wildest expectations. I want you to succeed in all areas of life, not just professionally. My wish for you is that you find happiness and success personally, and that you find ways to give back to your community.

My fervent hope is that someday, you will be my age telling your children and possibly your grandchildren about your many success stories. My hope is that those stories always begin with, "and it all started at Springboro High School."

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