

Vanishing Graduates & Minnesota's Future Greatest Hits Quotes

3:08 (time this quote occurs in the full program) This world economy is changing and putting new demands on us so much quicker than it has in the past.

Bill Blazar, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce

3:20 We're competing not even against Wisconsin, heaven forbid, in terms of ACT scores and those kinds of things ... We're competing against India and China to make sure our students are successful in those high-level occupations we want to have to be part of our country and part of our economy.

Jeff Olson, St. Peter Public Schools

4:07 We need to be the state that uses its brainpower when we don't have the brawn-power anymore. But you can't do that if you don't have kids graduating from high school, enrolling in college and completing college successfully.

Peter Hutchinson, Bush Foundation

6:34 I think there's a bubble that is building and it is about to break. We really need to pay more attention to it, because from an economic perspective, employees or people are our biggest resource, especially in Minnesota.

Tony DelDotto, Vision for Business

7:10 If you think of all the companies that call Minnesota home, large and small, we're not going to have the trained labor force to support it. We are not going to be innovative, entrepreneurial, cutting-edge — if we are not raising students who can perform and be creative thinkers and be excited about discovery.

Renae Oswald-Anderson, Neighborhood House

8:08 The actual number of high school graduates in Minnesota is going to decline by 7 to 8 percent in the next 10 years. Decline — one more time — it's going to go down. And none of us have that in our heads. None of us are imagining that 'the number of high school graduates is going to shrink? How can that be?'

Peter Hutchinson, Bush Foundation

7:43 We have to be sure that we're educating people and taking full advantage of all the potential that we have in the state if we want to continue to be the place that we think we are and that we aspire to be.

Traci Parmenter, Admission Possible

14:53 You see our kids — low-income kids, middle-income-kids, upper-income kids — they're all at the same place in 8th grade in mathematics, yet the upper-income kids go on to earn college degrees in the 70 percent range and the low-income kids are in the high 20s. Something happens between grades 8 and 12.

Kent Pekel, College Readiness Consortium

19:07 When you have to have fundraisers in my seventh grader's class for chemistry supplies, that's craziness. To think we're living in Minnesota, we're living in a state that values engineering, high-tech, STEM — or we keep saying these things. And here we are, selling cookies to get enough materials for chemistry classes. That breaks my heart.

Rena Oswald-Anderson, Neighborhood House

24:52 If we don't move graduation rates forward, if we don't move pre-kindergarten programs along more strongly than we are now, if we don't continue to support our high schools and the creative work that they need to do...if we don't do that, we're going to be a mediocre society, we're going to have a mediocre community....Boy, I don't think any of us want to be a part of mediocrity. I heard a quote the other day that: 'Excellence is expensive and mediocrity is more expensive.'

Jim Peterson, Gustavus Adolphus College (former president)

10:38 I think we need to get back to that relationship building between teacher and student and community and do something to engage the parents and invite them, get them excited, get them involved and let them know that this school is their school too because this school has their child eight hours out of the day.

Kari Davis, Twin Cities United Way

22:17 There are contributions that can be made along any line of interest or any line of ability or amount of time. I work for a mentoring organization and anyone can mentor. But that is a bit of a time commitment. There are people who can't give time but can give money, or there are people who can go to the Capitol and advocate. There are a lot of opportunities to give back and not everything is going to be the right fit for everyone. But being invested in your community in one manner or another is important.

William Tully, Big Brothers, Big Sisters

24:26 The reason why children fail is because we let them in a lot of ways. And I think that me personally, as a human being, I don't want to know that somebody fell through the cracks because of something that I couldn't do. Change is possible and it's up to me to change the lives of the students who I think I can help who I know I can help

Tinbete Ermyas, Macalester College graduate