**COLLEGE DUX ADDRESS — JAMIESON MANGER**

For the Year 12s sitting in this room right now, this could be the sixth Dux speech you will have heard in your time at Mount Lilydale. For many others, it could be the first. Regardless of how many of these you’ve sat through, I want this to be the one that makes an impact.

Like many of the other Duxes who have graced this platform, I have many people to thank for my successes last year. Unlike some of the others, I would like to address my speech directly to you, the students of MLMC.

Every single one of you is unique. You have different smiles, different laughs, different values. You have different styles of learning and different goals for your high school careers.

Your goal as a student may not be to Dux — and I’m not offended by that, not in the slightest. Your goals may be long term — you want to finish a Cert II in Building and Construction by the time you graduate, you want to win a medal at the Sports Awards, you want the ATAR that will get you into a Bachelor of Education.

Or they may be short term — writing something you’re proud of in English, scoring above 85% in Maths so you can get an Academic Award, reaching out to a teacher or a friend to let them know that you’re struggling and need help.

Your goals, just like you, are unique. Every single one of you sitting before me here today wants something slightly different out of their high school experience. So don’t you dare let anyone tell you what you want.

You are the one that decides your own capabilities. Whether others have high or low expectations of you, you know the way to make the most out your high school experience.

Don’t do a subject you hate just because people expect you to do it. And don’t feel limited by your past decisions on the effort you put into school, or your commitment to only certain types of subjects. The real thing that will drive you through high school is your passion, so seize that excitement, and follow that pathway no matter how new or difficult it may first seem.

The Dux is a label given to one member of a school community. And it is a title that I am proud of. But I know it is not for everyone. All I ask that you do this year — and I ask this to each and every one of you, as your fellow student — is that you let no one tell you your limits. They are for you and you only to decide.

So make the choices that makes you happy. Be the student, be the person, that you know you can be and know you want to be. Every school year presents to you a new set of possible experiences, gives you the opportunity to explore your own likes, your dislikes, and to grow into the assured, passionate and confident people that you all have the ability to be.

This year, seize the opportunities that are out there, waiting for you. Only you know what you are capable of achieving.

Thank you all so much for your time today. I wish you a brilliant 2021.