

Remarks by Principal Swanson
Kevin Flike Introduction
January 28, 2020

Good morning, Hingham High School, and welcome to today's assembly.

I *hope* Semester 2 got off to a great start for you yesterday, and I *promise* you it's about to get even better, reinforced with new meaning, once you've met today's guest speaker and drawn inspiration from his unforgettable story.

I want to start by thanking the two great community organizations that made today's assembly possible. The Hingham Education Foundation and the Hingham Sports Partnership make huge contributions to our schools in so many different ways, and they are co-sponsoring this event. We all owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude, not just for this assembly, but for all the ways they make our school a better place.

At HHS, a school-wide assembly with a guest speaker is pretty rare. The standard we set is high. For me, as your principal, I need to *know* that your time out of class will be richly rewarding. And I need to *know* that the speaker is someone who personifies our school's core values. In other

words, I need to know the speaker is someone like Kevin Flike. And as you'll soon see, people like him are hard to find.

I won't tell his story in this introduction. It's *his* story, and he can tell it much better than I could. But I *will* tell you that Kevin Flike is a man with a powerful message for all of us: students, teachers and principals alike.

Originally from Upstate New York, Kevin Flike is a former college athlete who attended Union College before enlisting in the US Army and becoming a Green Beret. While serving in Afghanistan and fighting against the Taliban, he was badly wounded and almost killed.

Kevin Flike's survival was a blessing. Not just for him, and not just for his loved ones, including his wife and two young daughters. As you'll soon see, Kevin's survival and recovery (against enormous odds) was a gift for all of us. His mission to serve his country as a soldier has evolved into a mission to serve others (including all of us in the auditorium of Hingham High School this morning) by sharing his message of service, resilience, grit, and hope.

I can't think of a better way for our school to start a new semester - or for all of us to reflect on what really matters in life - than by welcoming our guest speaker, our neighbor, and our friend...Kevin Flike.