Graduation season is upon us, and I'm sure that many of you have been as busy as I have attending ceremonies and parties. This year was especially hectic for my wife and me, as our oldest son graduated from college and our middle son graduated from high school on the same day!

Our facilities have also been busy preparing for graduation. Circleville will hold its ceremony on June 13, while Cuyahoga Hills and Indian River celebrated their graduates in May.
It was moving to see parents overcome with emotion at the sight of their child receiving a diploma. One father had come from out of state to see his son graduate and couldn’t hold back tears when his son’s name was announced. A youth told me he had dropped out of school, and had it not been for his DYS commitment, he wouldn’t have graduated high school. Now, he is applying to a community college for fall enrollment.

Several of the student speakers thanked their parents and grandparents, but they also thanked their teachers, youth specialists, and other staff for their constant support and encouragement.

These are the moments that show us we are making a difference. I thank you all for the work you are doing to positively impact our youth.

It does matter, and it changes lives.