雪亮的刀，要用在对的地方

尊敬的老师们、亲爱的同学们：早上好！今天我在国旗下讲话的题目是《雪亮的刀，要用在对的地方》。

上学期，学校组织我们看了一部讲京剧武生的电影。银幕上那个孩子，七岁进戏班，每天天不亮就扎马步、压腿、抡刀。冬天，水房地面结着冰，他摔一个跟头爬起来，再摔，再爬起来。二十年过去，他成了名角。有一回演出，台下有权贵让他改戏词去讨好自己，他站在台上，手里的刀雪亮，愣是一字没改。他说：戏可以改，人不能改；刀可以放下，腰不能弯。散场后好几天，我心里都回响着这句话。

同学们，这位武生教给我们的品质，叫正直。他练刀二十年，先练的不是刀，是腰。马步扎得稳，人才能站得直。他拒绝改戏词的时候，没有观众喝彩，没有掌声，可他没有弯一下腰。真正的正直，就是在没有人看着、也没有好处可得的时候，依然把该守的规矩守到底。

把这件事放到我们身上，一样成立。升旗时站得笔直，不交头接耳，这是守规矩；食堂排队不插队，这是守规矩；考试时再想考好，也不看一眼同桌的答案，这是把腰挺直。校规班规看着像绳子，其实是马步——今天扎得住马步的人，将来才压得住大事。反过来，今天爱占小便宜、爱抄近道的人，就像戏班里偷懒不压腿的孩子，将来台上一亮刀，腰就软了。

在此，我向全校同学发出三点号召：第一，从下周起，升旗、排队、自习，在没有老师盯着的时候也做得和老师在场时一个样；第二，遇到有人起哄破坏规矩，不跟着起哄，也不跟着起哄的人走；第三，把这位老武生的故事讲给家人听，让正直这两个字，像他的刀一样，在我们学校雪亮雪亮。

同学们，每个人手里都有一把看不见的刀，那就是自己的本领。愿我们先扎稳马步，挺直腰杆，再把这把刀，用在对的地方。我的讲话完了，谢谢大家！

A Bright Blade Belongs in the Right Cause

Respected teachers, dear students: good morning! Today my speech under the national flag is titled A Bright Blade Belongs in the Right Cause.

Last term our school took us to a film about a wusheng, a martial-role actor of Peking opera. On the screen, that boy entered the opera troupe at seven. Before dawn every day he held the horse stance, stretched his legs, and swung his blade. In winter the floor of the water room froze over; he fell head over heels, got up, fell again, got up again. Twenty years passed, and he became a celebrated star. One evening, a powerful man in the audience demanded that he alter his lines to flatter him. He stood on the stage, his blade flashing bright as snow, and did not change a single word. He said: the play can be rewritten, the man cannot; the blade can be laid down, the back cannot bend. For days after the film ended, that sentence kept ringing inside me.

Students, the quality this wusheng teaches us is called integrity. He drilled with the blade for twenty years, and what he drilled first was not the blade but the back. Only a firm horse stance lets a person stand straight. When he refused to change his lines, there was no cheering crowd and no applause, yet his back did not bend once. True integrity is keeping the rules you should keep all the way through, even when nobody is watching and no reward is in sight.

Lay this upon ourselves and it holds just as well. Standing ramrod straight at the flag-raising ceremony, whispering to no one, is keeping the rules; queueing in the canteen without cutting in line is keeping the rules; wanting a good grade badly in an exam yet never glancing at a deskmate's answers is straightening the back. School rules look like ropes, but they are really the horse stance. The one who can hold the stance today can shoulder great matters tomorrow. Conversely, the child who loves petty gains and shortcuts today is like the student in the troupe who skips leg stretches: the moment the blade flashes on stage, his back goes soft.

Here I make three calls to the whole school. First, starting next week, at flag-raising, in queues, and in study hall, behave exactly the same when no teacher is watching as when one is. Second, when someone stirs a crowd to break the rules, neither join the heckling nor follow those who do. Third, tell this old wusheng's story to your families, so that integrity shines in our school as bright as his blade.

Students, everyone holds an invisible blade in the hand: one's own ability. May we first root the horse stance, straighten the back, and then put that blade to use in the right cause. That ends my speech. Thank you all!