



Vision:
100% Student Success

Mission:
"Educate and prepare each student for college, career, and life."

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April 21, 2020

Graduates and families of the class of 2020,

I, and the Pinellas County School Board, are committed to ensuring all graduates of the class of 2020 are provided a graduation ceremony that honors the traditions of each school and the accomplishments of each student.

Our entire community is saddened that the current health crisis is impacting many of the rites of passage that are traditionally celebrated by graduating seniors. I want to thank our school leaders, parents and all involved who have been working hard to find ways to honor the class of 2020, through door decoration contests, yard signs and senior spirit weeks. While these may be small things, which obviously cannot replace the experiences that were planned for your senior year, I hope they demonstrate to the class of 2020 that, as a community, we see you...and we support you during this time.

The desire for everyone involved is to have a traditional, in-person ceremony. With the uncertainty of when this could occur as the safety, health and well-being of our students and families is of the utmost importance, the district will ensure planning for both in-person and virtual commencement ceremonies which respect school traditions to the greatest extent possible. Planning for in-person ceremonies during the summer of 2020, is still full of many unknown factors that include potential changes in the guidelines of health professionals and site availability. Please know that I am personally working directly with the Tampa Bay Rays, the city of Clearwater and Ruth Eckerd Hall to coordinate if, and when, our traditional graduation venues would be available later in the summer. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey below to inform the planning of in-person ceremony options that the district would implement if social distance and large gathering guidelines can be met during the summer of 2020. The survey will remain open until Friday, April 24.

[Class of 2020 Graduation Survey](#)

The district will continue to also plan for a virtual ceremony which incorporates all portions of a traditional graduation ceremony including student speeches, the reading of each graduate's name and a graduate address from their principal. This will ensure that if we are unable to hold an in-person ceremony, due to regulations associated with the current health crisis, each graduate still has a celebration to honor their accomplishments. Our virtual ceremony planning will be done in a manner that is personalized not just for each school, but each student through submission of photos and memories that will be included within the ceremony.

The best-case scenario is that all our planning for a virtual ceremony is not needed! If that occurs, we will turn the submissions for the virtual ceremony into a video keepsake for each graduate and their families. It will also ensure that any senior who is unable to attend an in-person ceremony later in the summer is recognized. I ask each graduate to engage in the virtual planning as it will create a memory for your entire graduating class.

The Pinellas County School Board and I recognize this is not an optimal way to close the high school experience but know that we celebrate and honor the tremendous accomplishments of the class of 2020!

Sincerely,

Michael A. Grego, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Pinellas County Schools