



TOGETHER WE EDUCATE EVERY STUDENT FOR SUCCESS

Pomp and Circumstance in COVID Times

To the Class of 2020,

Prom and playoffs, senior nights and spring break. Fond farewells and new beginnings. College, career, cap and gown. That's what we expect for spring of senior year. Instead we are keeping our social distance, staying home, and stocking up on essentials. What else is going to change, and how will we deal with it?

School as you have known it for 13 years ended abruptly when Governor Inslee announced a statewide K – 12 school closure through the end of the school year, while continuing learning by other means. We understand his decision was necessary to protect the health and well-being of communities throughout the state. Nevertheless, that doesn't relieve our stress, disappointment, and even grief over losing the many valued traditions and ceremonies surrounding graduation.

We – your teachers, counselors, principals, coaches, paraeducators, and support staff – are still here for you. We are going to help you complete your academic year, graduate, celebrate, and create lasting, good memories even in a time of trouble. We will do that with you, providing ways for you to communicate with whomever you need to complete your courses and be prepared for what comes after graduation. We will give you opportunities for distance learning so you will complete the credits you want and need. Together with you we will satisfy graduation requirements, offering additional options and flexibility for classes you have started or planned. You can help by taking advantage of learning opportunities online and by staying in touch with teachers, counselors, and principals.

As for graduation ceremonies, high school principals are working with teachers and students to determine how you may celebrate. We have seen and appreciate the suggestions that everyone has shared with us. We are considering several alternatives, including a virtual ceremony option due to the possibility that social distancing and limits on large groups may be in place for an indefinite period. Whatever we do, we want this to be a memorable celebration with pomp and circumstance, speeches, and photos of family and friends.

There are a lot of questions we are seeking to answer for you, and we will share them as soon as we can. You will be able to find those questions when we have better answers under the "For The Class Of 2020" tab here: <https://www.rsd.edu/coronavirus/frequently-asked-questions>.

The State Board of Education recently adopted "Emergency Rules for Waiving Certain Graduation Requirements in Response to Novel Coronavirus." District and school administrators are working to adapt these rules to make sure you graduate and receive the diploma you have worked so hard for. Please watch for updates from the district and your schools. Your senior year is unlike that of any class before yours but we are striving to give you a strong send-off.

Rick Schulte

Dr. Rick Schulte, Superintendent
April 9, 2020