Graduation Ceremonies during COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Bayonne Community,

On March 16, 2020, Governor Phil Murphy signed Executive Order No. 104 (EO 104); implementing aggressive social distancing measures to mitigate further spread of COVID-19 in New Jersey. Among other directives, Governor Murphy’s Executive Order indefinitely closed all public, private and parochial preschools and elementary and secondary schools to students beginning on March 18, 2020. Executive Order No. 107 (EO 107), signed on March 21, 2020, prohibits gatherings of individuals for parties, celebrations, and other social events, which includes all in-person graduation.

According to the New Jersey State Police Colonel Patrick Callahan “In light of the components of Executive Order No. 107, and in the best interest of the health and safety of the public, in-person ceremonies, including graduations, all parades, including “wave parades,” that invite people to gather at a certain location, proms, and other similar celebrations violate the enumerated conditions of the order, and should therefore be cancelled or postponed until such time as these restrictions are lifted. Until such time, virtual celebrations and other remote forms of recognition should take the place of any in-person or public ceremonies.”

Since the Executive Orders will remain in effect until further notice, only virtual graduation ceremonies can be planned at this time.

We recognize that this sudden disruption to the normal operating procedures could be upsetting for our Bayonne school community at all levels. The resilience and adaptivity required to thrive in the face of unprecedented situations are characteristics embodied by the Class of 2020. As the new Superintendent of the City of Bayonne Schools this is certainly not how I planned to address our wonderful graduates. However, as a community we will adapt and overcome this adversity as directed by the State of New Jersey.

As always, we will keep our community informed if any further updates or changes to the order occur. Our principals will be formulating plans and will be in touch with our graduates soon.

Bee Safe and Bee Well,

John J. Niesz
Superintendent