

Shrewsbury Borough School

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SUPERINTENDENT

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Dear Class of 2020 and Parents:

In response to a few parents who contacted me regarding the June 8th date for photographs for our Virtual 8th Grade Graduation Ceremony, I have changed the date for everyone. Their main concern was that they would not be able to find appropriate dresses, suits, and allow for adequate time to alter and tailor this clothing in time for June 8th. The new date will be Monday, June 15th and students will utilize the same appointment schedule that we have already established. I'm sorry for any inconvenience that this change may cause to our students and parents in advance.

This now means that our official Shrewsbury Borough School 8th Grade Graduation Ceremony has been moved to Wednesday, June 24th. A link for the ceremony will be provided so that everyone can enjoy the evening from home safely at our traditionally scheduled time of 6:30 PM . Additionally, a link will be provided so that everyone can also enjoy the 8th grade awards ceremony safely from home.

On June 15th, you should bring as few members of your immediate family as possible to the school. To ensure your safety and health, very specific procedures will be in place to ensure that no one is unnecessarily placed in harm's way. Masks are mandatory for all visitors to SBS at all times and you will be directed to each photo location during the process. Before entering the building, your temperature will be screened. Please do not come to the school if you are ill. Students may remove their masks for pictures only. We will have the Shrewsbury Police Department and staff members on hand to assist everyone during the day and to ensure that our procedures are followed.

I have had a few parents inquire about why we haven't committed to a Modified In-Person, Outdoor Ceremony even though Governor Murphy recently announced that they could take place after July 6th. The answer is simple. According to the Governor's Executive Order #148, public gatherings are limited to no more than 25 people in **total**. Without going into great detail about the many, many challenges that this presents to SBS to organize, I estimate that we would have to hold multiple ceremonies to graduate all 56 members of the Class of 2020. If we scheduled a ceremony for four students at a time with two parents each, we would need approximately 14 graduation ceremonies to have every student walk across an outdoor stage and be acknowledged. After each ceremony, everything that we use during the 'mini' graduation needs to be completely sanitized and disinfected. Additional school personnel would be needed to ensure that visitors to the school are safely distanced, temperature screened before entering the school, screened for obvious signs of illness, masked etc.

This is an **incredibly** high burden of responsibility and liability for our school to essentially 'guarantee' the health and safety of every student, parent, and employee during these ceremonies. We would again need

the assistance of our local partners from the Shrewsbury Police Department, the Shrewsbury Borough OEM, and the Monmouth County Health Commission #1. Additionally, we would need approval from the Monmouth County Executive County Superintendent and the New Jersey Department of Education to ensure that we have planned to implement all of the Governor's Executive Orders, and all of the guidelines and procedures from the CDC, NJDOH, the MC Health Commission #1, and any local directives.

As I referenced in my last letter to the Class of 2020, it bears repeating that the ***“NJDOE recommends that districts take full advantage of virtual ceremonies, which are the safest alternative graduation ceremony at this time.”*** This guidance can be found on the [NJDOE](#) website.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at any time if you have any questions or concerns at any time.

Very sincerely,

Brent A. MacConnell
Superintendent