



April 1, 2020

Dear Class of 2020,

Well, this is certainly not how any of us expected your final year of high school to go. It's not what your teachers expected. It's not what your parents expected. And it's certainly not what any of you expected. Not in any of our wildest dreams did any of us think that after more than 12 years of hard work, that we'd be where we are today: at home with our devices and pulling our hair out because of PowerSchool outages.

I graduated from Wautoma High School in central Wisconsin back in the 1990s, and over the last few weeks, I've tried to put myself in your shoes. I'm not exactly sure how I would have handled a statewide school closure during my senior year. We didn't have texting or Facetime to stay in touch with friends; we couldn't keep ourselves entertained by watching or making TikToks; we couldn't ask Alexa to stream a playlist for us when we were bored; and distance learning, or whatever you want to call it - virtual, online, etc. - simply did not exist.

But while the circumstances would have been different, I'm sure I'd feel the same way you are feeling today. I'd be mad that my senior year of track or baseball hadn't started yet and I'm sure I'd cringe every time someone said the season might not start at all. I'd be disappointed about special, high-school-ending events that my friends, my classmates and I had been looking forward to for years were all of a sudden in question. And I'd be worried about how my grades would hold up during these unique times.

I wish I had all the answers to the questions in your head or those being brought up on Snapchat. I don't know how long this pandemic will last. And, I don't yet know when, or if, school as we knew it prior to March 13, will resume.

But, as the Superintendent of the School District of New Berlin, here is what I do know - what I will guarantee to you, right now: the SDNB *will* celebrate the Class of 2020! I, along with the district administration team, Mr. Buckley at Eisenhower, Mr. Fesenmaier at West, and several others have already begun working on this. We will hold graduation ceremonies, either on their regularly scheduled date - if it is safe and we're able - or at a later, yet-to-be-determined date. And we will try to find a way to host prom, though we don't know when or where. We know these events are important to you, and they are to us, as well. You've earned them, and we'll find a way to honor that.

Class of 2020, we know how important these next 10 weeks are to you. And we want you to know how important you are to us. We miss seeing you, we're thinking about you and we're here for you.

As was said in one of the greatest films of all time (at least according to my daughter), *High School Musical* --"We're all in this together".

Joe Garza  
Superintendent