May 1, 2020

Cornell Class of 2020:

Earlier this week Governor Tom Wolf, along with Secretary of Health, Dr. Rachel Levine announced that “In-person graduation events likely won’t be in the cards for the Class of 2020.”

Cornell Administration has been exploring many alternative options to celebrate graduation and the Class of 2020. We know these alternative options can never replace the experience of walking across the Cornell stage to receive your diploma dressed in your cap and gown, but they are the best we can do with the current situation. It is still too early to make a final decision at this time, however I wanted to reassure you of the following:

- You will graduate as scheduled.
- We all are sympathetic to the disappointment of ending your high school experience like this.
- As soon as it is safe and permissible, we will announce plans to celebrate the Class of 2020.

Depending what happens in the next few weeks we can determine what our next steps will be in terms of graduation. If allowable we can do a later summer ceremony, if not we can plan on a fall or even winter ceremony. We also think it is appropriate to plan for some sort of virtual recognition. Regardless, it is important that you and your families feel you were able to appropriately close this important chapter of your life, and be recognized for your accomplishments and achievements. You all deserve a fantastic send off, and we’ll do what we can to do that. In the meantime, continue to work on your academic responsibilities. Continue to work and communicate with your teachers and end your academic career at Cornell on a high note. All of you still have work to do, finish strong because it isn’t over yet! Keep practicing the recommended safety precautions, stay safe, and use this time the best way you can. I encourage all of us to use this time to connect with family, read a book you never thought you would, listen to music, tinker with an instrument, or start a new hobby! Keep safe and more to come!

Sincerely,

Dr. Aaron Thomas
Superintendent