



West Orange Public Schools
179 Eagle Rock Avenue
West Orange, New Jersey 07052
(973) 669-5400 ext. 20512 Fax (973) 669-1432

Superintendent of Schools

J. Scott Cascone, Ed. D.

May 4, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

As you are probably aware by now, today at approximately 12:00 PM, May 4, 2020, Governor Murphy issued an order extending the closures of all New Jersey's public schools through the end of the 2019-20 school year. Last week the executive boards of the New Jersey Education Association, New Jersey Association of School Administrators, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, and the New Jersey School Boards Association penned a joint letter to the Governor urging him to keep schools closed for the remainder of the year. While this decision is certainly not grounds for celebration; I think we would all agree that under the circumstances it was the right decision.

Speaking from the perspective of the school district, with the possibility of a return to school this year removed, we may now focus our efforts and thoughts squarely on ensuring that this school year concludes as smoothly and constructively for our students as possible. We will continue to monitor, receive, and process feedback from our stakeholders and will continue to engage in the process of continuous improvement relative to our E-learning platform.

We are in the process of organizing virtual ceremonies for the various commencements and moving up exercises if social distancing guidelines and large group assembly restrictions remain in place through the month of June. That being said, we have certainly not closed the door on the possibility of conducting some form of an in-person celebration later on in the summer if allowed under state and local guidelines. We remain committed to providing all of our graduating students the highest quality experience possible.

Regarding the permissibility of operating on-site summer school programs: no decision has been made by the state as of today. We will continue to monitor the situation and begin to develop contingency plans for offering virtual experiences if on-site summer programs are not allowed.

A recommendation, which I have emphasized since the onset of this crisis, has been for us to focus on the day at hand and to not get too far ahead of ourselves. It is impossible for us to know exactly what the future may bring, but we can control what we do today to ensure that the children of our community are impacted negatively as little as possible both academically and socially and emotionally. That is exactly what we will continue to do each and every day to the best of our ability.

Please know that your cooperation, support, and strength during these days is greatly appreciated. This has truly been a team effort and will continue to be so. In the meantime, I wish you and yours the very best for good health in the days ahead.

Sincerely,

J. Scott Cascone, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools