



Office of the Superintendent HCST Graduation Update: ATD/CPHS, HTHS, EXP

May 31, 2020

Dear Class of 2020 Students and Families:

From the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Hudson County Schools of Technology has worked tirelessly to respond to the crisis, with two priorities at the forefront of every decision: safety of members of our community and continuity of learning. Every resolution has been carefully considered using the latest data, statistics and discoveries of the medical community. We have not taken any decisions lightly and continue to seek the guidance of experts in the field, in coordination with the State of New Jersey and the Department of Education.

As we approach the culmination of this school year, graduation has been on the minds of Administration, graduates, families and all stakeholders of the Class of 2020. In March, at the onset of the Shelter-in-Place no one could even imagine what the balance of the school year might bring. We acknowledge and understand this is a challenging time for us all...

The HCST leadership team has worked closely with Board Members, Administration, Principals, faculty, staff and students to create a virtual graduation ceremony worthy of the accomplishment it represents. I am proud of the work that has been done by all of our dedicated school teams to create meaningful virtual experiences. Your Senior Advisors with Student Government, Central Office Support, Principals, Supervisors, Teachers, Technicians, various High School Volunteers and I are all here to honor the hard work and dedication of our graduating students and the contributions you have all made to our school district.

Earlier this week, Governor Murphy announced that in-person graduation ceremonies may commence in July, however, a strict set of guidelines must be followed in order for this to occur. After reviewing the State's formal guidelines and meeting with our fellow Hudson County school districts, local and county officials and emergency management teams, we will continue to move forward with our plans for virtual graduation ceremonies. This is the same decision that the New Jersey Department of Education has recommended, noting it is the "safest alternative graduation ceremony at this time." We expect that these virtual ceremonies will have a high level of student participation, and give you - as our graduates - many fond, lifelong memories to cherish.

We have been directed by the State time and time again to base our decisions on the data and numbers provided to us, and the truth of the matter is that Hudson County remains the epicenter of New Jersey's COVID-19 outbreak. Rest assured, Administration, Principals and school-level teams are working to identify an equitable, feasible way to host an in-person acknowledgement without jeopardizing the health and safety of our faculty, staff, students and their families. We recognize that a virtual ceremony is no match for holding your diploma in-hand for the first time. We are actively identifying the most appropriate way, without compromising the safety for our students, staff or community members to receive your diplomas in an in-person manner that is memorable and complies with the current social distancing guidelines in place. Further Class of 2020 important dates and information is forthcoming.

We continue to monitor this ever-changing situation and remain committed to providing our students with the proper send off they deserve without compromising the safety of our community. Thank you for your continued patience, cooperation and support of our efforts for the Class of 2020.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Lin-Rodriguez".

Superintendent

Amy Lin-Rodriguez, Superintendent ■ Telephone (201) 662-6700 ■ One High Tech Way ■ Secaucus, NJ 07094

Mission Statement

The Hudson County Schools of Technology is a visionary community that inspires creative independent thinking through diverse learning opportunities

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