



DuPage Regional Office of
EDUCATION
Excellence in Education

DR. DARLENE J. RUSCITTI
Regional Superintendent
DuPage County Schools

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May 8, 2020

Dear DuPage County School Students, Parents, Administration, and Staff:

We have heard from many of you seeking clarification about the recommendation we shared on Wednesday, May 6, 2020 about graduation ceremonies.

The DuPage Regional Office of Education and DuPage County Health Department's firm recommendation is that districts **do not conduct any type of in-person graduation ceremony, including drive-through ceremonies.**

To clarify, this means:

- No drive-in or drive-through ceremonies;
- No photo sessions of students walking across a stage;
- No gathering of people, even if the intent is to keep them spaced out, both from a time and or space perspective.
- Honoring graduating students through virtual events and ceremonies is allowed and encouraged.

The rationale for these recommendations is outlined below:

1. Based on current levels of COVID-19 activity in DuPage County, our goal and responsibility is to protect the health and safety of our communities, our students, and our staff.
2. The current level of new COVID-19 cases being identified in DuPage County and related hospitalizations and deaths indicate we are not at a point where we can safely bring groups of people together.
3. **We continue to experience widespread transmission of COVID-19 in DuPage County.**
4. Our front line healthcare workers, long-term care facility workers, police, fire, essential employees and others who are putting themselves on the line every day **do not have adequate supplies of personal protective equipment** to use in caring for persons requiring their attention.
5. Hospitals and health care systems still are treating high numbers of COVID positive patients.

The Governor's Stay at Home Order, with some limited exceptions, states that all individuals currently living within the State of Illinois are ordered to stay at home or at their place of residence. All public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a single household or living unit are prohibited, except for the limited purposes permitted by the Executive Order.

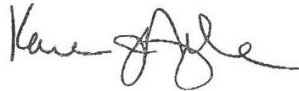
We understand many of you have worked to develop plans that minimize in-person contact in line with the ISBE and IDPH guidance released on May 2, 2020. This state-wide guidance recognizes the need to account for local differences in disease activity and the number of students. The guidance also indicates the need for consultation and coordination with local public health departments, law enforcement, and legal counsel in planning any in-person events.

We recognize the impact this difficult decision has on our students, families, and school communities. These communities look to you as leaders. Please take this opportunity to demonstrate how we can meet the dual goals of celebrating our students and protecting the health of our communities.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Darlene J. Ruscitti in cursive script.

Dr. Darlene Ruscitti
Regional Superintendent

Handwritten signature of Karen Ayala in cursive script.

Karen Ayala, MPH
Executive Director
DuPage County Health Department