



Marple Newtown School District

Office of the Superintendent

July 8, 2020

Dear Marple Newtown School District Community,

This communication is for our Class of 2020 seniors, 8th grade students, and their families, to provide an update regarding hosting a graduation, senior prom, and 8th grade promotion ceremony.

As Delaware County is now in the green phase under Governor Wolf's reopening process, more opportunities for businesses and recreational facilities are available at 50% capacity with restrictions. However, the green phase prohibits gatherings of more than 250 people at one place in one time.

We were hopeful by now that Pennsylvania would no longer have this occupancy restriction, which would permit us to celebrate our MNHS graduation, host a prom, and 8th grade promotion ceremony. Unfortunately, this social restriction is still in place, and therefore, we must adhere to the Governor's order.

I realize in May, my communication shared that we had anticipated "unrestricted, in-person activities" and had communicated that our intention was to move forward with these events. Disappointingly, the changes to the Governor's restrictions prohibiting large gatherings of more than 250 people, along with the updated CDC guidance place large in-person gatherings in the highest risk category and force us to once again postpone these events.

The Chester County Health Department, which is currently overseeing Delaware County was also consulted. The Health Department was in agreement that such events are categorized as highest risk and advised all Delaware County Superintendents not to host them.

The safety and security of all students and school communities are a priority. However, I hope you realize some school closure guidelines are not ours to decide and supersede our local authority.

At this point in time, I understand students and families are going to be disappointed as we are as well. Please know we share a common mindset for the students and their families to have a proper graduation and believe that we will be able to host such events in the future.

As previously communicated, we remain committed to holding an in-person formal MNHS graduation and 8th grade promotion ceremony. For now, the scheduled July 17th date is no longer a possibility. As for the prom, the District is not able to host the event until restrictions are lifted.

When we are able to gather more than 250 people at one time in one place, we intend to hold an in-person MNHS graduation and 8th grade promotion ceremony weather permitted on the football field. If occupancy restrictions are lifted, we will continue to keep Friday, August 7th and Wednesday, November 25th as options.

We share the disappointment that we are restricted from holding our traditional ceremonies at this time. We sincerely hope our students and their families understand the challenges our District has faced with planning these cherished end of the year events, especially graduation, while upholding the occupancy restriction opposed upon us from the PA Governor, CDC, and Health Department guidelines.

Sincerely,
Tina Kane, Ed.D.

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