

To my favorite Seniors,

This is supposed to be your year. The year for your senior prom, sporting events, the musical, our senior last walk together, cheerleading, and graduation. You were supposed to be the captain of that team, the officer of that club, or the student who wanted to be with their friends one last year before venturing into the unknown. This was THE year that your entire schooling was building up to. But it was taken from you because of this global pandemic.

Let me be very clear; you were robbed and it is so unfair! If you are upset, that is a very appropriate feeling. Some people downplay the situation because they don't know what it feels like to have their senior year taken away at the last moment.

I get to be your principal at this wonderful high school because I care above everything else. That caring does not stop just because you are not in our hallways right now. In situations like this, I worry even more about you. There is a great deal of uncertainty, but rest assured, I am looking at creative ways to make the situation the best it can possibly be for you and having those events that I know are so important for you. We are all in crisis mode, but please know I am doing everything I can to help during this difficult time. You are not forgotten. I am thinking of you. I am here for you. I truly care! I miss your faces and voices in our hallways!

I know there is nothing I can say right now to make up for the time you have lost in what is supposed to be one of the best years of your life. One thing I can offer is some *encouragement*. Right now, you have the power to make the most out of this unfortunate situation. The class of 2020 is resilient and innovative. You have meant such a great deal to me. I want you to have all of those important benchmarks to make memories forever. Please know that I am working every day for you.

I can also offer some *advice*. Help one another and your family. They need you. Do your grandparents or an elderly neighbor need groceries? We all need you. Utilize your technical skills to bring yourselves closer together. Practice social distance but stay as social as ever. Text, Face Time, Snapchat. Reach out to your friends, read, exercise. Practice kindness and compassion.

Lastly, I can offer you my *support*. I feel your pain. I know it hurts. The staff at Hayes hurt with you. Again, you are not forgotten. We see your hard work; we value your perspectives and we cherish all of the moments with you and will continue even from afar. The video you made for our staff was wonderful. It hurts my heart to write this to you. Keep your heads up, our school and our community need you. You provide the hope for a better future. This year may not be what you envisioned, but I will work to let everyone know that is still very much your year and I will never give up on my promise to you.

Stay healthy, you have my thoughts and prayers.

Dr. Stranges