



Dr. Teri Staloch, Superintendent
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools
Prior Lake American/Savage Pacer
Column run date: May 16, 2020

At the end of this month, Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools will mark a commencement unlike any other in our history. We will celebrate 640 Prior Lake High School and Bridges Area Learning Center students during a virtual commencement and modified event due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the last several weeks, we have been working hard to collect student and parent input and explore options to make graduation as special as possible, while following MN Department of Education (MDE) guidelines and achieving our number one priority, which is the safety and well-being of students and their families, as well as school staff.

As a result, we are finalizing plans to provide a virtual graduation program on May 28th. Additionally, over the course of several days, we plan to provide an opportunity for students to walk across a stage as their name is read. We will also plan for a traditional ceremony on July 23 for commencement, should the guidance from MDE change between now and then.

The class of 2020 has had an unprecedented journey. They were born into the world of 9-11 and 13 years later they are graduating amidst a pandemic. This class knows all about how to handle adversity and uncertain times. They also know not to take anything for granted and to intentionally build relationships that maintain strength, uncover optimism and put the needs of others first.

The end of their senior year through a pandemic will always be an important memory but I do not believe it defines these students. This group of Lakers has celebrated many accomplishments throughout their years. Each student is leaving PLSAS defined by the decisions they have made, the support they have been given, the hard work in which they have been engaged, the relationships they have built, the lessons they have learned, the jobs they have worked and the friendships they have fostered.

We will celebrate these accomplishments and honor these students with a ceremony that complies with safety guidelines and we will provide a graduation video that students, families and our entire community can enjoy.

Congratulations class of 2020! You have forged a path and left a mark unlike any class before you. It has been a joy to watch you grow over the years. You make us all proud. #WeArePLSAS #BridgesClassof2020 #PLHSClassof2020 #RelationshipsMatter