



May 2020

Dear 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students, Parents, & Guardians:

First, let me thank you for all of your calls and emails regarding a non-traditional graduation ceremony. All your ideas and input were certainly taken into consideration. I would have never envisioned canceling our traditional graduation ceremony before COVID 19 changed life as we know it. Amid the current coronavirus pandemic, the PHESD 144 school district is planning a virtual 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation ceremony that will begin streaming on Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 4:00 p.m. on our district's YouTube channel. This event will follow the format of our traditional graduation ceremony that takes place each year. The school and district administration will celebrate our students and we will also have speeches by our student council president, valedictorian and salutatorian. During the ceremony, the graduates name will be read and their yearbook picture will appear. Students who didn't take a yearbook picture will be given the opportunity to submit a photo. There will also be a highlight video of various 8<sup>th</sup> grade student accomplishments throughout the year.

Here are a few additional updates regarding the remainder of the school year for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

\*The last day for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to submit instructional packets and all remote learning assignments is Friday, May 15, 2020.

\*Lawn signs to honor each graduate have been ordered and will be available beginning May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Lawn signs can be picked up at Prairie Hills Junior High from 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Mon-Fri. Also, signs will be available on the school buses at each elementary school site during lunch distribution from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

\*The 2020 modified graduation fee is \$45.00, which includes the following: Diploma, Diploma Cover, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade T-shirt, Autograph Book and Graduate Souvenir Gift Bag. Refund checks, Report Cards and all graduation items will be available for pick-up at Prairie Hills Junior High from 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Monday, June 1<sup>st</sup>-Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.

\*Pre-order Yearbooks will be available for pick-up Monday, June 1<sup>st</sup>-Friday June 5<sup>th</sup>. A limited amount of Yearbooks will be available for purchase (\$25.00) during this week as well.

On behalf of the entire PHESD 144 school district, please accept our sincere appreciation of your understanding during this time of uncertainty.

Respectfully,

Kenndell L. Smith, Principal