



May 13, 2020

Dear UCDSB Families and Grade 12 Graduating Students,

As you may be aware, the [Minister of Education is encouraging school boards](#) to honour student achievement for the 2020 school year and have graduation ceremonies and celebrations when it is safe to do so. We support this decision and whole-heartedly agree about the importance of honouring and recognizing the incredible accomplishments of our graduating students.

Given the circumstances and the uncertainties of this global pandemic, and in consultation with public health authorities, the Upper Canada District School Board has no option but to postpone June 2020 graduation ceremonies at all of our secondary schools and at our TR Leger School of Adult, Alternative and Continuing Education until June 2021.

Please know that moving the ceremonies to June 2021 will not impact the ability of our students to actually graduate from high school if they have met the diploma program requirements.

In light of this decision, many of our secondary schools are already exploring a wide range of alternative and suitable ways to celebrate and send off our graduating class of 2020 this spring.

We did not make the decision to postpone graduation ceremonies until June 2021 lightly. Doing so will allow our schools the greatest opportunity to plan and honour our graduates when we can be more certain that school buildings will be fully operational, and the greatest risk of the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us. The UCDSB is following the example of other school boards and post-secondary institutions that have already decided to postpone their graduation events.

Each school's Graduation Committee will decide how they will honour their graduating class of 2020 at that time, be it a stand-alone ceremony or combined with the graduating class of 2021. Schools will stay in touch with their students and families to keep them updated about this important event. Several schools have already initiated these conversations around the annual senior prom which – depending on the specific secondary school – may have a link to the annual graduation exercise.

Our graduates have worked hard to achieve their high school diploma and all of us are committed to ensuring they have the opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments with family and friends at a commencement ceremony.

We continue to wish all of you good health and to stay safe during the unusual times of this pandemic.

Sincerely,

John McAllister
Chair of the Board
Upper Canada District School Board

Stephen Sliwa
Director of Education
Upper Canada District School Board