

Edwardsville High Graduating Seniors Pick Up Diplomas, Post For Pictures As School Adjusts To Honor The Class With Vision

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Although Edwardsville High School, like every other school in the state of Illinois, has been closed since March 17, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the closure hasn't stopped the activities surrounding the graduation of the Class of 2020.

Beginning Monday, the EHS graduating seniors and their families began picking up their diplomas and posing for professional and family pictures in their caps and gowns as the school began its celebration of the graduates, which will climax on Saturday morning with virtual commencement exercises which will begin at 10 a.m. The graduation ceremony will be live-streamed on Riverbender.com, its sister site EdGlenToday.com and various other outlets in the city.

Four stages with various props, including the school's tiger mascot and a large "2020," among others, were set up for pictures and were moved inside to Lucco-Jackson Gym instead of the visitor's parking lot because of rainy weather.

"Today's a really exciting day for our kids and our graduate candidates," said Edwardsville High principal Dr. Dennis Cramsey. "We had originally intended to do an outdoor ceremony and pictures today, and the weather did not cooperate as well as we had hoped, so we moved everything indoors, we have four stages set up, we have

pictures that are being professionally taken by Rick's Pics Photography. All those pictures can be accessed at rickspicsphotography.com, and then, three additional stages where parents and families can take their pictures on those stages."

Even though a traditional graduation ceremony can't go on because of the pandemic, Edwardsville's administration has been very happy to help set up the activities to honor their graduating seniors.

"There's no doubt that all of us would have been happy to be in a traditional setting for a graduation commencement ceremony," Cramsey said, "but we're really excited to do a number of things to celebrate and honor our seniors. This photo-op day and diploma pickup is one way that we can tell our seniors how much we appreciate them, how excited we are for them. As I said, there's no doubt that we all would have liked to been doing this in a traditional setting."

The activities and ceremonies were put together with social distancing and safety rules in mind for the protection of everyone involved.

"Probably the most important piece of putting these events together, and all the events we've put together, is understanding the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education guidelines for handling and conducting graduation ceremonies and events," Cramsey said, "and we've done everything to adhere to those guidelines to ensure that all of our graduates and families remain safe, as well as our staff and faculty that are participating. And in the end, we're going to have a really terrific celebration."

Cramsey also had a special message for his senior class, who he called The Class With Vision when they entered EHS for their freshman year in the fall of 2016.

"First of all seniors, I miss you," Cramsey said. "I love you guys greatly, I am so happy for you. I tagged you with the title of 'The Class With Vision, the Class of 2020' four years ago. You guys can use that vision you've shown and demonstrated throughout your time in high school to do great things in life. Certainly, COVID-19 is not going to stop any of us, and it's certainly not going to stop you. Senior Strong!"

Congratulations Class of 2020, the Class with Vision!

Class of 2020 Virtual Graduation

You are invited to watch the Class of 2020 Virtual Commencement Exercises on Saturday, May 23, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. The program will be made available by following District 7 partners:

RiverBender

<https://www.riverbender.com/>

<https://www.edglentoday.com/>

ECTV – Edwardsville

<https://www.cityofedwardsville.com/LIVE>

and on Charter TV on ECTV Channel 993

Madison Communications

<https://gomadison.com/>

and on Channel 13

The virtual graduation video on YouTube.com will also be activated on the District's YouTube channel as of 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 23, 2020 at the following link.

https://youtu.be/_2fl3SpH_ZA

Also, check out the Kudoboard celebrating our graduates at <https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/5ucDYS4o#view>