

## Being in School During the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020

Written by Marianna Kern on May 29, 2020

Around January and February of 2020 people were aware of what was going on in China with the Covid-19 outbreak. I never thought that it would get bad in the United States, but I was wrong. Around mid-March more cases were reported in our country, which caused fear to spread. It was not even a week before things changed dramatically in the country.

My last day ever of in person classes was on St. Patrick's Day (March 17). We were told we would be back in two weeks, but we never did get to come back for school. Doing school completely online was a struggle for me at first. I know that the teachers also struggled, so we were all in it together, figuring out what best fits, and what doesn't work. Not only was it hard for me, but also for my younger siblings. I have a quote from my little sister, Therese Kern. She was a 6th grader in Spring 2020 at Regis Middle School, she said "What I remember about doing online school was how stressful it was listening or watching a video that the teacher assigned and trying to figure it out. Also how, if we had a question we had to email them, and it could take days for them to respond to us." My little brother, Trevor Kern (7th grader in 2020), also had something to say, "Tests are hard, homework is difficult to learn on your own, but after a while it's not bad, once you learn how to do it." As I look back at my last few months of school, it was not what I would have wanted. It was hard to learn, but taught me some time management skills.

One thing I learned during my months of being stuck at home is that Wifi gets really bad when you have five people on it at once, half of them doing live videos. My older brother, Jaret, came home for Spring Break at the beginning of March, he's still here because his college switched to online in the middle of his break. My dad was also staying home for work, so between them, my two younger siblings and me, my mom was not allowed to use any Wifi. I think we all grew closer during this time. Spending all day, every day with the same five people, can be frustrating, but had its benefits. I was able to ask questions to my dad and older brother if I didn't understand something. I also helped my younger siblings with homework, which was nice, since I actually understood the math they were learning. My mom is the only person who leaves the house, usually, when she works. Instead of buying a few things on many trips, she learned to buy groceries in larger numbers. I also watch the news every night, and I have to say, they show the number of cases for each day, and at this moment in Wisconsin the numbers are not high at all. It gets sad when you look at the numbers for places like New York.

It's sad to see what a horrible state our country is in at the moment. Too many businesses are closed, many for forever. I know that I am a lucky person to have both of my parents still working and getting to live without fear of money being low. I have the pleasure of being able to stay home everyday and not having to worry. I also don't have a person in my house that could get really sick and possibly die. Obviously, anyone could die from Covid-19, but my family is young and healthy, so the chances are very low. I also know that I am lucky to have so many siblings, most of them being home at the moment. I get to have someone to talk to that's in my room and have actually grown closer to my little sister. I feel bad for those who may be stuck in their homes who have nobody to be with. I can only imagine how the stats for mental health will be for 2020. I can sometimes feel myself getting more anxious or depressed, I

don't want to think about people who may have bad mental health and aren't able to leave or don't have someone there to recognize that they need help.

Now on to the last big experience I had as a high schooler; my graduation. Two days ago, May 27, my family got to go to school (Regis High School) and park in the parking lot. Once we were there we got to experience the traditional Baccalaureate Mass. We were in the parking lot and had to go to the live stream service and watch the Mass online from our phones, in our car. Mind you, it was very warm, and our truck doesn't have air conditioning, also the website was very slow and didn't work at some points. I spent half the time watching the Mass and the rest reloading a web page so I could watch the Mass. After that ended the graduations began. Our school was small so they decided to take two days to give each senior ten minutes to come in and walk across the stage and graduate. They began at 2:00 after the Mass ended and ended at 8:00 that night, presuming on May 28 at 2:00, ending at 8:00. I had the pleasure of graduating on May 28. Because of the sickness going around, I was only allowed nine guests, I brought my immediate family and two of my friends. I got to awkwardly walk down the auditorium and have my name announced. It was really nice to be able to be there in person, especially when I know that many people were not able to have a graduation ceremony in person, and had to watch their graduation on a video.

To conclude the recap of my past three months. I had to learn how to be taught through a computer screen, and I did manage. The struggle was there, but we all learn how to live with the situation we are put in. Lastly, I graduated from high school in a way that will forever live in history, mainly because I was told there would be a video of all the graduations combined that will be sent out.