# Audio file

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# Transcript

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

Hello beautiful people. This is Shenyra Harris at CSMB and on today's podcast, I will be interviewing the class of 2024 on COVID and how it's impacted their high school experience. Now before I get into the interviews, I thought that maybe I could give you guys an anecdote or story on how COVID has impacted my high school experience as also being a member of class of 2024 at Collegiate. Now COVID, if I recall correctly, it started in 2020. Well, that's when like we really figured out what it was. And I was in 8th grade at the time we had just went on spring break. Before we went on spring break there was a bunch of dues that we had to pay like to go on these trips for promotion and for like, almost an eighth grade prom. So I was really excited to get back to school for that. So spring break came to an end and I remember my granny getting like a notice, basically saying that we wouldn't be returning back to school for like a week or so. I'm like, OK, well, cool. Just an extended spring break. I have no problem with that, but then that week passes or I think and she gets another notice basically saying that we were going to be virtual and that we needed to come pick up these iPads so that we could use... I think it was teams that we used, we could use teams to finish our classes virtually, so I'm like. At this point I'm kind of disappointed and sad because it's like wow, so, we won't even be able to experience our promotion. We won't be able to experience our 8th grade prom, like we won't be able to go on these trips that we paid for. And mind yall, we didn't even get our money back. We couldn't even get a refund. So yeah, I was just kind of sad about that because I witnessed two of my cousins going to their 8th grade dance and they had a great time. I experienced them going on their trips and they had a fun time and I experienced their promotions, like we all went to the same middle school. But I was really just upset about that. But actually finishing eighth grade virtually, it was not hard for me at all. I kind of cruised through it, to be honest. Like all through elementary to middle school up to I would say up to high school, school was easy for me. Like I didn't really struggle. And I loved going to school like I would literally cry when I could not go to school, even if I was sick, I still wanted. to go to school. Like, that's how much I just enjoy being there and getting educated. So yeah, summer comes around and I think that's when COVID, like, really reached its peak. COVID that's when the cases started rising and more people got ill and, like, started to like, die and stuff. So at this point, uh, my granny, she didn't allow us to go outside. She didn't allow us to go anywhere where there. A big crowd of people, to be honest. She was just on it like, and even when we did go outside, she made sure we wore masks she made sure that we stayed 6 feet away. Sometimes even we has to wear We had to wear gloves because that's how serious it was. And so yeah. So um, summer time there's really not much to it. I think... I always assumed that we were going to be able to just go back in person. I never thought that we would have to start off high school virtual, so when I heard that we were going to start off virtually I didn't really think much of it because I was like, oh, it'll just be like 8th grade I'm gonna be cruising through it again. But I didn't even think I didn't think about collegiate as a whole. I didn't think that was going to be so much of a transition between the two schools. So freshman year starts and um let me see if I'm thinking about it... the beginning of the year was not a struggle, to be honest. I was just chilling, but it was the start of the year. We didn't really get that much work, but we did get work. It was, it was way more than what I was normally used to, but it wasn't nothing like too crazy. Let me see. I think it was towards the middle of the school year where things started to really take a toll on me and to where I really started to realize, huh? This is not going to be as easy as I thought it was going to be. I started seeing that my grades were dropping and that, like my love for school, was starting to kind of fade like I just really started to feel like I was just doing it because I had to do it, you know, and I could see that I was losing myself like I was felt like I was drowning, to be honest, and that was because, like me, I just held all that struggle and everything in. I just held all that weight cause like the only person that can fix it is me. This is this is my problem. So I need to fix. And then I also just didn't want to be a disappointment to my grandmother cause like she was so used to me getting straight As all the time and just like, I didn't want her to see that I even had a C to be honest. And then I just remember failing my first test ever, and it was just like, yea no she's not going to know about this. I didn't even tell her I had failed it. I just remember sitting in my room just crying, just crying my heart out because that's how disappointed and defeated I felt in myself, you know? So yeah, it just started getting worse and worse, and it was just like, Oh my goodness. So I ended up telling her about it and she to my demise, she was very like nurturing about situation and she was just telling me that she just wants me to try, like, grades, these these are just letters. I shouldn't be worried about this as long as I'm trying. That's all that matters, and that just helped me feel much better, like it was still a struggle, to be honest. But just knowing that she didn't hold me to this high of standard as I thought she did, And that she Loves me no matter what, and that she knows that I'm trying my best with all that matters has really made me feel better. And then so yeah, that was really freshman year for me as A whole like It was up and down, to be honest. I ended it off Not too bad, but I know that I could have done better, to be honest. And um, mind yall I'm also a sports girl. I've been playing sports for as long as I can remember, so I'm not being able to play sports freshman year because of COVID like we had sports. but my granny was so still, so, like terrified of us getting it that she didn't allow me to play. So it just made me like I also didn't have that I was just sitting in the house and I hate just sitting around. So that also, like, I guess took a toll on my mental state. So yeah, COVID as a whole for my freshman year, It really did impact my high school experience, at least the first year of high school for me. Now one of the questions that I'm asking the interviewees is, "would I ever like, restart high school where there without COVID?" And I wouldn't ever restart high school even if I did have the chance to where COVID wouldn't exist. I wouldn't, because I just feel like that experience shaped me as who I am today. Like it shows me like it made me understand the standards that I hold myself to. It showed me that I need to not be so hard on myself because I'm always hard on myself. I'm a perfectionist, to be honest, so it just really showed me that I need if I need a breath, take a breath. If I need help, ask for help. So yeah, I would never change it. I would never go back. Like I am who I am today because of that. So yeah, now let's just get into right into the interviews. OK, today I'm here with?

Jayla (First interviewee)

Jayla.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK, so how has high school been for you so far?

Jayla (First interviewee)

I feel like it's been quite a time considering we had COVID and then we had a school shooting and then we also had A period of time where we weren't able to get the fullest amount of education and you can see that a lot with like AP exams and how for one class we had to push it back because we just didn't have that. So it's it's been a wild ride and hopefully senior year will just be simple and straightforward.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

Yeah, I get that. So actually that goes right into my second question. So was it difficult to start high school virtually for you?

Jayla (First interviewee)

I mean, not really considering I was doing virtual in middle school like at the end of it when COVID had, like, just reached its peak, so it wasn't much of a challenge, but it was. I felt like I was being robbed of what I had precieved What was going to happen considering all the experience? Like for instance, I've been shared. Like my father, my mother would talk about their freshman year and I feel like I just didn't get that and you can see it now with other freshman classes, like they've been able to do camp Wyman and like, come to come together more and were able to explore more with their friendships and with other people in their classes. But with us it was very isolated, I felt.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

So that actually does answer one of the questions that I did have. So I think I'm just going to go to the last question on my list. So if you could go back in time and like say like, restart high school like where COVID and like the shooting and stuff didn't happen, would you restart?

Jayla (First interviewee)

Absolutely. I feel like I I think I think all of our experiences would be different. I feel like we would maybe even be different people if we didn't have COVID. We would probably not maybe have all the same friends that we have now or be in the same group that we have. And I feel like COVID and the shooting just exacerbated those types of things, but. More so COVID considering many of us were virtual for the entire year and I didn't have anyone talk to beginning a sophomore year because I stayed virtual that entire time. So I think I I would. Me personally I would.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

Ok, that's it. Thank you.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

I'm here with?

Ezra (2nd Interveiwee)

Ezra.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

Ok so how has high school been for you so far?

Ezra

It's been good. I've met a lot of new friends and met a lot of new people.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK. Was it difficult to start high school virtually?

Ezra

Yeah, it was really difficult because I didn't know anybody coming into school, so I had to really make friends on my own and, like, talk to people on my own. But it's hard to do that virtually.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

So do you believe that

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

it still has an impact on the way that you learn and operate today?

Ezra

I think it does still have an impact because I learned to procrastinate a lot when I was on virtual and I still do procrastinate a little bit and it's kind of hard. getting back into the flow of things.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

So do you think that it also like put a stop or a halt to like your idea of what your high school experience would be like?

Ezra

Yeah, because high school hasn't been really normal for any of the years and I was expecting like... I don't really know how to say it, but I didn't expect us to come together as a community as we did, and it's really nice.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

Lastly, if you could restart like if you could go back in time and restart high school where COVID didn't exist, would you?

Ezra

Uh, probably not because I feel like I wouldn't have the same friends. now and I wouldn't have had the same experiences, and I did enjoy the COVID year despite it being virtual half the time.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK. Thank you. OK, today I have with me?

Kit (3rd interviewee)

Kit.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK, so how has high school been for you so far?

Kit (3rd interviewee)

It's been pretty good. There's a lot of fun stuff. I like it.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK. So was it difficult for you to start high school virtually?

Kit (3rd interviewee)

It was definitely different, but coming from middle school where we had like ended virtually, definitely helped with that transition.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK. Do you believe that it still has an impact or any impact on the way that you learn and operate today?

Kit (3rd interviewee)

I think it's definitely helped me with my time management. There was a lot of times where I needed to like learn skills to manage the workload. Kind of on my own and that's definitely been beneficial.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK. So do you think that it like put a stop or halt on like your idea of what your high school experience would be like?

Kit (3rd interviewee)

It definitely was an interesting start because it wasn't typical, but once I came back in person I had a very normal high school experience well, relatively.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

So lastly, if you could go back in time and say restart high school where COVID or any of the like hurdles that you had during high school right now, would you?

Kit (3rd interviewee)

I probably wouldn't just because I like to have experiences that weren't perfect. So I have the opportunity to learn and grow.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

Alright. Well, thank you, that's it.

Kit (3rd interviewee)

Of course.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

 Today I'm here with?

Jacob (Last interviewee)

Jacob Hicks.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

So how has high school been for you so far?

Jacob (Last interviewee)

I think high school has been really good. I think it was a transition my freshman year because I was home school before and so it was. It was a very different atmosphere to enter. It was a very different way of making friends and maintaining friendships. But I really like the place where I am now and I'm very thankful for my high school experience.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK. So was it difficult for you to start high school virtually at all?

Jacob (Last interviewee)

Like I said, because I was home schooled, it wasn't really. I was already used to doing work at home and the weird part was really that I wasn't teaching myself as much like other people were teaching me because. Generally, how my homeschool experience was is that you know my mom is there to help, but I'm like going through these workbooks and I'm teaching myself these concepts. And so it was. It was weird and different to have somebody else be teaching me most of my curriculum. But I would say that overall it wasn't that hard and I had friends from that that lasted. So even though I didn't really quite yet know a bunch of people from the school, I still had people to hang out with and still had places for social.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

Do you believe that like it has impact on the way that you learn and operate now?

Jacob (Last interviewee)

I would say yeah, because I look back on especially like my math class freshman year, when you realized that I didn't learn certain things because there wasn't time. And obviously, like there wasn't time to learn some stuff and my teacher had other people to attend to. And that's really something that I see, like across the board with multiple classes. From freshman year, it's just that it was like there wasn't time to do things. Teachers were stretched really thin. And so we didn't learn things. We didn't learn things well. And sometimes I realize, yeah, it's affecting me now and things like taking the ACT or in my math classes now things that like, I should know this should be foundational, but they're not quite there.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK, so like you said, you were home schooled. So do you believe that COVID like also put a stop or a halt to like your idea of what your high school experience would be like?

Jacob (Last interviewee)

Ohh for sure I'm completely I envisioned something completely different, honestly I remember. I remember when I was submitting my application it was like a couple weeks, maybe like a month or two before the lockdown started in 2020 and it was just like crazy like how what I had envisioned like the first day of school. And like, the first couple weeks of school being at the building and like, how you know it's always like portrayed in like movies and stuff and like shows and it's like it wasn't that at all. It was just being on the computer with meetings for months was very different.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

OK. OK. And lastly, if you could like, go up, go back in time and say like restart high school like COVID didn't exist, would you restart?

Jacob (Last interviewee)

I don't think I would. I don't a lot of people probably say that they're like, get some super sentimental reason and I'm honestly in the same boat. I mean, I think there's definitely things that have happened in my high school career. Things happen because of COVID things have been messed up by that, that are hard. And I mean, I feel like especially our class, I mean every single year. We had something. It's hard like. COVID freshman year and we moved to a new building the next year and obviously shooting this year like there's been things that have been hard and if if shaped us in different ways and it's like those are are hard things, they've really been difficult. But I feel like they've shaped who I am today, and they've shaped the friendships that I have. And like what I'm involved in, and I'm very happy with who I am and and the people that I know and what I'm involved in. So since those Say plays a pivotal role I wouldn't want to change it.

Narrator (Shenyra Harris)

Well, that's it, thank you. And that's a wrap for interviews. I just felt like this was an important message to share because it just shows how people could go through the same event, but their experience or their outlook or their take on that event could be different because with me COVID was like I said in the beginning, it kind of made my first year a living hell, to be honest. But for other students, it wasn't that hard. And like for the redoing the school year, some people said yes and some people said no. So yeah, it really just shows that people experience different things and they could all experience the same event, but that the way that it affects them is different. So yeah, thanks for listening.