

Background Information

The Class of 2020 will certainly be remembered by the unique circumstances with which they finished their high school career and graduated to the next stage of their individual and collective lives. The novel coronavirus, COVID 19, disrupted many of the traditions a senior typically will experience as a milestone event. The graduation ceremony represents the pinnacle of these events and as such requires all efforts to make it as unique and memorable as possible for the graduates while also providing the necessary level of honor and respect an accomplishment of this magnitude deserves.

Adhering to the current state and local guidelines, mandating social distancing and dictating the maximum size allowable for any mass gathering, presents a substantial challenge when planning an event of this size. The Class of 2020 will graduate 354 students on May 31, a record in and of itself. To protect the health and safety of those in attendance, as well as those with whom the attendees will most certainly interact over the days that follow the ceremony, our student, school and community leaders developed a plan to make certain that the graduates are able to “gather” one last time and experience the ceremony, albeit non-traditionally, together.

The following general guidelines are to be used to explain the details and logistics of the SHS Class of 2020 Graduation Ceremony.

General Guidelines

Beginning at 1:45 pm on Sunday, May 31st, students and parents/guardians may begin assembling, in a family vehicle, in the SHS student parking lot using the Northwest entrance off of Stadium Drive-Entrance 3. You will be greeted as you turn left into the lot at the northern entrance and handed a graduation carnation. If the Senior has already purchased and decorated a parking spot, they should park there. All other students should begin to fill in parking spots beginning with those on the east end of the lot and filling in each and every spot to the west. ALL CARS SHOULD BE FACING EAST—toward Community Drive. Administrative staff and law enforcement will be there to assist in parking. **Students and parents/guardians are to REMAIN in their vehicles throughout the entire ceremony** and to maintain social distancing and health recommendations. Only one car per graduate is allowed. All other guests may stay within their vehicles along the parade route. Students should wear their cap and gowns as they would as part of a traditional ceremony. Cars must be street legal and able to fit into one parking spot (i.e. No tractors, limos, semi-trucks, RV's motorcycles or other such vehicles. Graduates are encouraged to decorate your vehicle to celebrate your accomplishment.

All students, and guests, should tune their car radio to 92.7 FM NASH ICON. At approximately 2:30, the graduation ceremony will begin its broadcast using this great community partner radio station. The ceremony will include all of the traditional graduation moments such as the student speeches, special music, calling of the names and the tassel ceremony. It should be just as you would experience if you were to be sitting in Lloyd Scott Gymnasium surrounded by your friends

and family. This time, however, you will be assembled, with your classmates, in the school parking lot. And rather than walking into the gym and out of the gym you will be driving into the parking lot and parading around town along a designated parade route. Friends and family who wish to witness your graduation (and parade) are asked to park in their vehicles along the parade route and practice social distancing.

Following the conclusion of the ceremony, at approximately 3:30, student vehicles will begin being released, one by one and row by row, for a recessional parade throughout the town led by Seymour Fire and Police. Again, school officials and law enforcement will assist in your direction. Upon exiting the parking lot, graduates will follow the Seymour Fire Truck and will turn North (left) on to Community Drive. They will continue north and will turn East (right) onto 5th Street. The parade will continue to Chestnut Street, where students will turn South (right). Students will continue through the downtown area until they reach 2nd Street, where they will turn West (right). The parade will continue along 2nd Street until it reaches Community Drive where the parade will conclude. Graduates will be able to go their own way at that point. Guests and family members who wish to view the parade are encouraged to park anywhere along the parade route to listen to the ceremony on 92.7 FM and to watch the graduation parade.

Diplomas will be mailed home to graduates the week following graduation.