

Subject line: Class of 2021 Graduation Ceremony Update

Date: March 23, 2021

Dear Class of 2021 students and parents,

Throughout the past year, we have been hopeful we would be able to hold our graduation ceremonies at The Schottenstein Center. We have simultaneously explored a number of alternative options for a graduation event worthy of the class of 2021. In recent weeks, it has become increasingly clear that it would be unlikely that we will be able to gather at The Schottenstein Center in the manner in which was planned due to mandatory cleaning protocols and increased costs. Additionally, The Ohio State University has not cleared outside groups to use their facilities as of today and there is no estimated date of clearance. We are aware it is important for you to know what the graduation arrangements are so you can plan accordingly.

Our team has worked hard to establish a creative and meaningful plan to recognize the very special Class of 2021. We believe we have a plan that honors our seniors and celebrates the culmination of 13 years of hard work.

Recognition of the Class of 2021 will occur in three phases, outlined below.

Phase 1: Student-Only Senior Sunset Salute

All four high schools will host a senior class-only event in their respective stadiums at 8 p.m. on Friday, May 21. Seniors are invited to attend in casual, school-appropriate attire, wearing cap and gown. Seniors will have the opportunity to gather as a class to hear traditional graduation remarks and speeches from their high school principal and classmates. All remarks in their entirety will be part of the virtual graduation ceremony (see below), and therefore, we will not livestream this informal event.

Phase 2: Commencement Walk

All four high schools will host a commencement walk on their school properties on May 22 and May 23 for graduating seniors. Each graduating senior will arrive in a passenger vehicle, seated in the front passenger seat, and will require one driver to accompany them. Other family members may ride in the car with the student. One car per student will be permitted. Families with multiple graduates may discuss special arrangements with the building principal if needed. Staggered arrival times will be assigned for families to arrive on school property. Cars will follow a continuous, marked route with one stop in front of the school entrance. As cars approach the front entrance, students will exit the car, the graduate's name will be announced, the principal will distribute a diploma cover to the student and a professional photo will be taken. Graduates will receive their diploma at the conclusion of their commencement walk.

No family members will be permitted to get out of the car. The student will re-join their family in the car and follow the continuous route and exit the school property.

Radio station WDLR (92.9 FM and 1550 AM) will provide its sound system which the school will use to announce each student's name. WDLR will livestream the commencement event and the announcement of each student's name as they receive their diploma cover, with pomp and circumstance playing in the

background. WDLR will broadcast live on their radio stations and on the school campus. Additionally, the commencement walk will be livestreamed on the district's website for loved ones and friends to view.

The commencement walk will take place over two days, two schools per day, with the expectation that each event will last several hours. The dates and times are assigned to schools based on graduating class sizes so organizers may manage any event planning adjustments that will need to be made related to the scope and size of these events.

Olentangy Berlin High School: Saturday, May 22 – 9 a.m.

Olentangy Liberty High School: Saturday, May 22 – 2 p.m.

Olentangy High School: Sunday, May 23 – 9 a.m.

Olentangy Orange High School: Sunday, May 23 - 2 p.m.

To ensure continuous traffic flow, students will be assigned staggered arrival times by last name, but will not need to assemble in alphabetical order. Additional detailed information about this event will be sent by the beginning of May outlining arrival times and event specifics. Please note, we are unable to accommodate any other guests on our property during the commencement walk. We encourage extended family and friends to tune into WDLR (92.9 FM and 1550 AM) and/or follow our livestream to join our celebration.

Phase 3: Virtual Graduation Ceremony

A video will be created for a virtual graduation ceremony that will be shared on the day of the commencement walks for each school. All speeches and remarks will be pre-recorded. Each graduate's name will be announced regardless of whether or not they participated in the commencement walk. The virtual ceremony will end with flipping the tassel and tossing the graduation cap in the air.

Our goal is to create a meaningful and memorable ceremony that can be shared with our students, staff, families, friends and community that illustrates how proud we are of our graduates' accomplishments and resilience.

We are pleased to have a plan to celebrate the Class of 2021. We recognize this may not work for every single senior and every single family. However, please know we are committed to do our very best to recognize and remember all the Class of 2021 has to offer our world.

Sincerely,

Mark T. Raiff, Superintendent, Olentangy Schools

Todd Spinner, Principal, Olentangy Berlin High School

Rob Griffiths, Principal, Olentangy High School

Michael Starner, Principal, Olentangy Liberty High School

Trond Smith, Principal, Olentangy Orange High School