

May 5, 2020

Dear senior and parents,

I appreciate you for your strength and perseverance during these difficult times. In regards to schools, this pandemic has impacted our seniors and their families the most. I hope you understand that our entire community wishes these circumstances were different for all of you.

Over the past several weeks, we have followed the guidance and directives issued by Governor Dewine, the Ohio Department of Health, and the Ohio Department of Education as it pertains the continuance of learning and all other school-related activities.

The sudden changes caused by COVID-19 have been challenging. In a matter of days, our normal routines disappeared as social distancing and staying at home became essential practices to stop the spread of the Coronavirus and to keep people safe and protected. Since March 16, our students, parents, staff, and community members have worked together to provide the best education possible through E-learning. Despite this adversity, our seniors have shown a continued dedication to their education and preparation for the future.

With the exception of a few classes that have tests/exams after this date, **Friday, May 8 will be the final day of E-learning for all seniors.** I encourage you to finish these remaining days of classes as strongly as possible.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has forced the cancellation of several events and programs this year. For health and safety reasons, all remaining events for the 2019-2020 school year, except graduation, are cancelled and will not be rescheduled. Sadly, this also includes Prom 2020. We understand the disappointment this brings to all who are involved in these events, and we appreciate your understanding regarding these tough decisions.

**Graduation is still scheduled for Saturday, May 23.** Providing closure for our seniors and their families is important. We want to honor the Class of 2020 and keep people safe. Today, the Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Department of Education once again provided us with information about best practices and considerations for planning a graduation. Mass gatherings of groups larger than ten (10) people are still prohibited. Therefore, this year's commencement must follow one of the following guidelines established by the ODH and ODE.

- Virtual Graduation
- Drive-Through Graduation
- Single-family in-person Graduation

The Allen County Health Department and area superintendents met last week Thursday to discuss graduation.

At this time, we are planning a virtual, single-family in-person graduation for our seniors. We believe our plan follows social distancing guidelines and is structured to keep people safe.

Here is our plan:

- **On Saturday, May 16 and Sunday, May 17, seniors and their selected family members will be scheduled in ten (10) minute blocks of time from 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. each day.** Our guidance counselors will be contacting you to confirm your date and time to be here. Similar to our normal commencement, this will be arranged alphabetically.
- **Each group should plan to be at the high school approximately 10-15 minutes prior to the scheduled time. Seniors and family must remain in their vehicles until you are called to enter the building.** A staff member will call to notify you when you may enter. Please provide our counselors with the best number to contact you on the date you are scheduled to be here. Congregating outside of the building or in the parking lot is prohibited before entering and after exiting the building. All vehicles must park at least one full space away from each other. Please work together to keep everyone safe.
- **Groups must be restricted to 10 or fewer people, including our graduates. No exceptions will be allowed.** All participating seniors and their families must plan accordingly and are encouraged to follow guidelines established by the ODH, specifically anyone who is considered at a higher risk of contracting the virus. The health department strongly recommends that attendees wear masks. If people are not feeling well, we ask that you stay home. We will have safety measures in place to disinfect areas that may be repeatedly touched.
- **Led by the student, each group will enter the high school through Door #5 (high school cafeteria) and go directly into the cafeteria. Seniors must return their school laptops and books at this time. Failure to return these items will result in not receiving a diploma or participating in the ceremony. Seniors must have their caps and gowns on upon entering the building.**
- Once all school items are returned, **the group will exit the cafeteria through the doors closest to the gym and proceed to the lobby area in front of the concession stand. Seniors must go to the concession to retrieve a bag of items from a school official.** As soon as this groups exits the cafeteria, the next group will be called to enter the building and must remain in the cafeteria until the previous group enters the gym.
- **From the concession stand lobby, each group will enter the high school gymnasium through the south doors (closest to the ramp). Seniors will be issued their diplomas at this time.** I will be in the gym to provide instructions for the ceremony. Seniors will be directed to an X on the floor. Parents will go directly to the table on the gym floor and stand on the opposite end of the senior. All remaining family members will be asked to

space out from each other. As I announce the senior's name, the graduate will walk towards the table and **receive his or her diploma from his parents/selected family member**. To finalize this accomplishment, the graduate will then flip the tassel on his or her cap and is encouraged to embrace with parents at that time. This portion will be recorded for our virtual graduation to take place on Saturday, May 23.

- **The group will exit the gym through the east doors (trophy case lobby/Slabtown Road) and go up the small ramp towards the gate.** There will be a photographer in this area to take a picture of our graduate. Once this group exits the gym, the next group may leave the cafeteria to enter the concession stand lobby.
- **After the picture is taken, the group will proceed down the hallway near Mrs. Brachok's rooms, turning right towards the band room, and exiting the high school through the doors between the choir room and auditorium.** Again, to keep everyone safe, groups must go directly to their vehicles and refrain from congregating in the parking lot.

This cycle will repeat itself until all seniors have received their diplomas over these two days.

Eligible seniors are not required to participate in graduation. However, I strongly encourage all seniors to take part in this special effort to make graduation as memorable as possible under such unprecedented circumstances.

We look forward to seeing all of you very soon!

#Wildcatnation

#BleedBlue

Sincerely,

Brian Jesko  
Principal  
Bath High School