



James F. Byrnes High School

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Todd Hardy, Principal

May 5, 2020

Dear Byrnes High School Families and Seniors:

Graduation is just around the corner, and we are so grateful that during these uncertain times our district has still found a way to be able to celebrate you as our seniors walk across the stage. This year's ceremony and audience is obviously going to look a bit different, but one thing remains the same; we are incredibly proud of you and your accomplishment!

Unfortunately, sometimes the excitement of the last few weeks of the senior year leads students to make impulsive decisions that they would not normally make. We have had instances over the last several years, in which a student or a group of students involved themselves in what they considered a "senior prank." These "pranks" have sometimes resulted in the student(s) missing graduation, being removed from school, or in extreme cases, facing criminal charges. Such situations are difficult not only for the student, but also for the parent and for the school. A time which should be marked by joy is instead marked by sorrow and frustration.

We want to do everything possible to avoid an unpleasant ending to an otherwise successful year. To that end, we are asking for your help. Please discuss with your student the need to continue working diligently to the very end of the year. Only those seniors who have successfully completed ALL requirements for graduation will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.

The faculty and staff at Byrnes are busy with plans to make this commencement an occasion that each graduate and family will remember fondly. I most respectfully remind each person attending the ceremony that although the event takes place in an athletic arena, the expectation is for a formal ceremony. We are committed to providing a ceremony with the dignity that the graduates deserve. The families of every graduate rightly deserve to hear the name of their student called. Personal celebrations should appropriately be reserved for a time after the ceremony. All persons who violate this procedure will be charged with disorderly conduct, escorted from the stadium, and fined by the Duncan police.

Because this is a formal ceremony, we require that graduates model this expectation by dressing appropriately and meeting the guidelines set forth. Graduates must be dressed in the predetermined acceptable attire beneath their required cap, gown, and collar. Embellishments are allowed for caps only (no collar) and include: a single color non-jeweled monogram with the graduate's official initials or the official cap topper provided with the student's university acceptance packet. Specifics can be found on the Byrnes homepage.

Again this year, we will hold commencement on Nixon Field. We are hoping for the best case scenario, but should we experience inclement weather we have planned for Saturday, May 30th at 9:00 AM as our rain date. For either date, our commencement ceremony will again be broadcast through a live feed accessible on the Byrnes High School homepage to allow all of your loved ones to experience this momentous occasion for your student.

Tickets will be required and strictly monitored for admission to the ceremony whether it is held on the original May 28th date or May 30th rain date. Each senior has been allotted TWO tickets for the ceremony. There are no extra tickets this year, and these tickets cannot be replaced should they be misplaced or damaged. We are following strict capacity guidelines set forth by the CDC and State Department.

Please review the enclosed Senior Reminders handout to ensure that you are familiar with important Covid-19 ceremony regulations, parking instructions, and attire restrictions.

Seniors, I congratulate you on your achievement, and I wish you continued success.

Respectfully yours,

Todd Hardy

Principal

