



KENMORE WEST HIGH SCHOOL

"Committed to developing knowledgeable, principled, and compassionate young adults"

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May 29, 2020

Dear Kenmore West Seniors and Families,

We are very pleased to announce that our Kenmore West High School 2020 Commencement will take place on Sunday, June 28, 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and guidelines issued by New York State and the Erie County Department of Health, our traditional commencement ceremony cannot take place at Kleinhans Music Hall as originally scheduled.

Throughout the planning process, we have received several suggestions from students and parents about holding a more traditional style commencement format in an outdoor setting, such as an athletic field or park. The New York State health and safety guidelines do not permit any large gatherings until phase four of the re-opening process.

The school and district has worked closely with the Erie County Department of Health and they consider large gatherings of any kind to be a **high risk to public health and safety**. For this reason, most towns and counties in the area have cancelled all large gatherings for the summer. The Office of the Lieutenant Governor (who is in charge of the Western New York region) recently informed several area superintendents that an in-person graduation is **not permitted at this time**. They will reconsider large gatherings only after we are within phase four of the re-opening process.

There have also been other suggestions about holding a movie drive-in commencement ceremony. This idea was discussed with our Senior Class Officers and Advisors, Student Council Officers and Advisors, Parent Representatives, and our School Leadership Team. The student representatives stated that the senior class wanted a live commencement ceremony experience that would allow the seniors to be together again, walk across a stage format, and receive their diploma in person.

The revised commencement activities fully comply with county, state, and federal safety guidelines and will ensure a safe environment for our students, staff, and families. We have worked closely with KW stakeholder representatives, the Erie County and New York State Departments of Health, the Town of Tonawanda Police Department, and District Administration to develop a commencement ceremony that is very special and will honor and celebrate our seniors and the Class of 2020!

The 2020 Commencement Ceremony will be comprised of two special activities:

1. Virtual Commencement Ceremony

- When: Sunday June 28th at 10:00 AM
- Where: Live viewing of the virtual ceremony at home
- What is it? A virtual ceremony that includes all the components of our traditional commencement ceremony
 - Welcome and Introductions
 - Superintendent's Address
 - Principal's Address
 - Valedictorian Speech
 - Student Council President Speech
 - Virtual Conferral of Diplomas
 - Special Guest Speaker
 - Senior Class President Speech
 - Special Musical Performances



2. Commencement Diploma Conferral Parade

- **When:** Sunday June 28th, staggered and scheduled starting times. The first group will begin at 12:00 PM, followed by subsequent groups in a continuous manner.
- **Where:** Starts in the KW main parking lot (Delaware Road) and ends on Colvin Boulevard
- **What is it?** After graduates and families have watch the virtual Commencement Ceremony at home, they will be asked drive to KW at their scheduled time to participate in the Diploma Conferral Parade.
- **Vehicles in the Parade:** One car is permitted in the diploma conferral parade per household and a parade permit will be provided. Students and families are encouraged to decorate their cars with KW themed messages for the parade! Please contact the main office if you have any questions or need further assistance. **More information will be shared in the coming weeks.*
- **Description of the Parade:** Graduates and immediate families will participate in a Commencement Diploma Conferral Parade. All students must wear cap and gowns and remain in their vehicle until they receive their diploma in the bus loop. **Due to the unique ceremony format, this year we have made a special exception and are permitting seniors to respectfully decorate their caps.*
- **Parade Route:** Delaware Road Parking Lot, Right on Delaware Road, Right on Highland Parkway, Right into Bus Loop, Right onto Highland Parkway, End of Parade at Colvin Boulevard
- **Conferral of Diplomas:**
 - Students/families will stop their vehicle near the entrance of the Highland bus loop
 - Students will exit their vehicle, wearing their cap, gown, and mask, stand in socially distanced locations as they wait to have their name called on the PA speaker system, and walk across the stage to receive their diploma
 - Student names will be read on the PA speaker system by teachers who were selected by the class
 - Students will receive their diploma from the commencement table with school administrators standing in socially distanced proximity. A photographer will take a picture of each graduate (mask required).
 - Student will move their tassel from the right side of their cap to their left, to symbolize their transition from candidate to graduate. They will walk further along the bus loop sidewalk to a third station and stand for a professional commencement picture (socially distanced/ no mask required)
 - Student will walk further along the bus loop sidewalk to the last station where they will re-enter their families' vehicle and drive out of the bus loop, turn right onto Highland Parkway, and end the parade on Colvin Boulevard
 - Families will drive their vehicle to center of bus loop to take a picture and remain in the vehicle
 - There will be a live-streamed video of each graduate walking across the stage area to receive their diploma
 - Families must remain in their vehicles at all times and follow the traffic director's instructions
- KW Faculty and Staff will be stationed along the perimeter of the KW property on Highland Parkway and Delaware Road to congratulate and cheer on the Class of 2020!

Seniors should have already ordered his/her cap & gown. If you have not done so, please call Jostens at 688-4077 ASAP. Ask for Mr. Tom McGrath. Please note that all seniors, who are participating in the parade, are required to wear a cap and gown. Please contact the main office if you have any questions about commencement (874-8401).

We are very proud and honored to host this event and to celebrate each student who will graduate and receive their diploma on this special day. We hope to make this event a truly memorable experience for all of our students and families. Congratulations on a successful four years!

Sincerely,



Dean Johnson
Principal





Kenmore West High School
2020 Commencement
Conferral of Diplomas



✘ Students will exit their vehicle, wearing their cap, gown, and mask, stand in a socially distanced locations as they wait to have their name called and walk across the sidewalk to received their diploma

🎓 Students will receive their diploma from the commencement table with school administrators standing in socially distanced proximity. A professional will take a picture of each graduate (mask required)

✘ Student will move their tassel from the right side of their cap to their left, to symbolize their transition from candidate to graduate and stand for a professional commencement picture (socially distanced/ no mask required)

✘ Student will re-enter their families' vehicle and process out of the bus loop, turn right onto Highland Parkway, and end the parade on Colvin Boulevard

*There will be a live-streamed video of each graduate walking across the stage area to receive their diploma.

*Families must remain their vehicles at all times and follow traffic director instructions

