



# KEARSLEY High School

Where pride, tradition  
and excellence meet

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May 19, 2020

Dear Kearsley Parents/Guardians of the Class of 2020 seniors,

I hope this letter finds you doing well. I know this is an exceptionally difficult time for our seniors (and parents/guardians) who normally would be celebrating all of the ceremonies that go along with a student finishing up his or her senior year. We, as a district, are saddened that we cannot bring some normalcy to these uncertain times during this stay-at-home order caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hopefully, last Tuesday night's "senior salute" brought some joy to all of you. I know the staff and I enjoyed seeing all of your faces. It seems like it's been an eternity since we last saw each other.

I've received many emails and calls with concerns and questions about celebrations, namely Commencement, Honors Convocation and prom and this letter hopefully addresses some of these questions.

## **Commencement (Graduation)**

While we were holding out hope for our scheduled June 6<sup>th</sup> Commencement ceremony down at The Whiting, due to both the federal and state regulations on holding large events, we have had to cancel the original date. Since we have no way of knowing how long we will be under the Stay Home order or even how long it will take for us to move through the federal and state phases for opening up the state, we are giving careful thought and have brainstormed a couple of options. I'm certain that we have come up with alternate ceremonies that will allow us to still celebrate your accomplishments. With that being said, we currently are dealing with many unknowns and will continue to make changes to abide by the current regulations.

Let's begin with what I do know. We have rescheduled the original June 6<sup>th</sup> Commencement ceremony to July 15<sup>th</sup> at The Whiting Auditorium. I truly hope that by then the COVID 19 pandemic is better understood and the Governor can allow larger indoor gatherings.

In the event that we are unable to hold our rescheduled Commencement ceremony at the Whiting on July 15<sup>th</sup>, we are looking at hosting our graduation at the C.K. Richards football stadium, right here at the high school. I know that having a graduation at the stadium isn't ideal, but I really feel it's a good option. The date

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would still be July 15<sup>th</sup>,

with the 16<sup>th</sup> as an alternate date in the event of bad weather. In either option, at The Whiting or at the football stadium, seating will be limited to parents only in order to adhere to the legal social distancing requirements.

In the event that we cannot legally gather either indoors or outdoors, we would have some form of virtual graduation. We would pre-record all of our speeches, awards, and recognitions of the class of 2020. We would read the names of the graduates, and a senior portrait would be displayed on the screen. Not ideal, but we still don't have all of the answers just yet.

Please realize that Kearsley High School wants our seniors to be able to celebrate this milestone with their classmates, whether indoors at The Whiting or outdoors at the football field, but we must work in accordance with what the Governor issues for guidelines.

## **Honors Convocation**

We will be recognizing our seniors who are graduating with honors in a virtual presentation. Seniors who currently have a 3.0 cumulative GPA will receive a Google form with information that we need in order to include them in the presentation. Please be watching your school email for the form and submit it as soon as possible. We want to make sure all eligible seniors are recognized! Please note: Graduating with honors will be based on your final GPA, so eligibility will be updated once grades are submitted at the end of the semester.

## **Cap and Gown Distribution - June 2nd**

We have set a date for seniors to come in and pick up their cap and gown as well as their honor cords, NHS stoles, service learning cords and any other other items you may have ordered from Jostens. **However, it is important to remember that your cap and gown will be issued only after you have successfully completed all of the graduation requirements, all materials (uniforms, textbooks, etc.) have been turned in and fines paid.** Please check the "Fee" section of your StudentVue account to see what materials have not been turned in and what fines or fees are outstanding.

We have booked Jostens on June 2<sup>nd</sup> between the times of 10:00 a.m. and noon to distribute the items mentioned above. If you have not ordered your cap and gown

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through Jostens, please be aware of the **May 25<sup>th</sup> order deadline**. Orders should be placed at [www.jostens.com](http://www.jostens.com). Phone orders are discouraged due to high call volume and long hold times. The cost for a cap and gown is \$35.10. As mentioned above, we will also be collecting textbooks, chrome books (if you checked one out), band and choir attire or equipment, athletic uniforms, outstanding fines and distributing yearbooks. **YOU WILL ALSO BE EMPTYING YOUR LOCKERS** under the supervision of our security guards and administration. This whole process shouldn't take more than 15 minutes to complete (if you come prepared).

In order to follow the CDC guidelines, "ALL" students will wear a mask and keep social distancing a priority. We will accomplish this by coming to the high school science wing during your designated time listed below. You will have your temperature checked by our school nurse, answer a few health related questions, and proceed down the 400 hallway to the gymnasium. You may stop at your locker to retrieve any items that need to be turned in. Please start thinking about any items you have at home or that are in your locker that will need to be returned to Kearsley High School. Remember, all fines and textbooks must be accounted for before you receive a cap and gown. Please check your StudentVue account for your fees and fines prior to coming into the school that day.

All I ask is that you be on time when you are scheduled to be here. You must wear a mask and maintain the six foot space at all times with staff and classmates. I'll have an "X" marked on the floors every six feet in the gym and in the main entrance of the science wing. If you can't follow these rules, security will ask you to leave!

CAP and GOWN assigned pick-up times (by last names):

| <b>SENIORS</b> |                     |             |                    |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| 10:00-10:15    | Alcorn – Burchfield | 11:00-11:15 | McConnell – Palmer |
| 10:15-10:30    | Burke – Douglas     | 11:15-11:30 | Palmeri – Sears    |
| 10:30-10:45    | Drinkwine – Hass    | 11:30-11:45 | Shannon – Valley   |
| 10:45-11:00    | Hect – McArthur     | 11:45-12:00 | VanBuren– Zissler  |

**Prom**

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This is a very difficult decision for us to make, but at this time we have cancelled any plans to hold a prom. Lapeer Country Club will be holding weddings (if they are allowed) in the near future and I just don't see how social distancing can be enforced. A prom where you need to be six foot apart doesn't sound like much fun to me. I am sincerely sorry that we are not able to offer any alternative event at this time. If circumstances change in the near future, and there is a way to make this happen, we most certainly will.

In closing, I feel that we can all agree that the end of the 2019-20 school year has been pretty crazy! It certainly didn't end the way we all expected when we started this fall. We will all wrestle with finding ways to deal with this strange ending. The current conditions we are all dealing with are not ideal, but we are all determined to get through this and be stronger in the end. The class of 2020 will go down in history as the class that made the best of a very difficult situation. I know I speak for the entire staff, we miss all of you so much. I wish all of you nothing but the best in all of your future endeavors.

Go Hornets and Stay Safe!



Brian E. Wiskur, Principal  
Kearsley High School  
Go Hornets!