

# Pioneer Central High School

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June 17, 2020

To our beloved Class of 2020 seniors and families,

Our district had hoped to hold a commencement ceremony that you well-deserve in our auditorium. We had aspired to provide the same experience for you that we have for the previous 50 classes who walked the stage in our auditorium. Our reluctance to announce a plan was to wait as long as possible in hopes for approval of an in-person commencement ceremony, which would have allowed all our graduates and their immediate family members to be together for this special event. Unfortunately, there has not been any movement at the state level that would allow that to happen. Both the governor and Department of Health directives explicitly forbid in-person, indoor graduation ceremonies.

Our team has worked to make your walk across the outdoor stage as close to the experience your family would see if you were in the auditorium. Graduates may arrive in a vehicle with those who reside in the same household. Graduates who reside in more than one home may have the members of the second home follow in a separate vehicle. [Review attached NYS guidelines and District directions included with this letter.] As you plan to attend the drive-thru commencement ceremony, know that we will broadcast the event live and record it so that your extended family can watch you walk the outdoor stage.

This may not be the graduation you wanted; however, you certainly will have the most memorable commencement ever at Pioneer! We are proud of you and are pleased to announce several special events for our 2020 graduation week. Review the attached dates and time so you can celebrate virtually together.

We will celebrate soon,

Mark Schultz  
Principal

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## ADMINISTRATION

**Mark Schultz**  
Principal  
716-492-9328

**Katelyn Welker**  
Assistant Principal  
716-492-9345

**John Collins**  
Assistant Principal  
716-492-9333

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Main Office  
716-492-9331

Guidance,  
716-492-9334  
716-492-9337

Health Office  
716-492-9344

Attendance Office  
716-492-9346



Achievement Night is when senior awards are traditionally announced. This year they will be prerecorded and then streamed on our *Pioneer Central High School* Facebook page and our *Pioneer TV* YouTube channel. Links for both can be found at [www.pioneerschools.org](http://www.pioneerschools.org)

**Watch the premiere on Facebook 6/22/20 @ 6 PM**

# **TOP 20 ACADEMIC RECOGNITION**

The Top 20 scholars will also have a virtual presentation of their accomplishments and future plans; in recent years, they have attended a board meeting to be recognized.

Watch on our *Pioneer Central High School* Facebook page and *Pioneer TV* YouTube Channel on 6/24/20 @ 6 PM

# **VIRTUAL COMMENCEMENT**

## **JUNE 26 • 6PM**

Watch on our *Pioneer Central High School* Facebook page and *Pioneer TV* YouTube Channel on Facebook 6/26/20 @ 6 PM



***To honor our graduates, Pioneer asks the community to light up the district with white and/or green porch lights June 26<sup>th</sup> through June 28<sup>th</sup>.***

## **Graduation is June 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Drive-through arrival times are 11 AM - 1 PM (see suggested times below).**

The drive-through commencement is for graduates and immediate family members. Your family will be able to see you walk an outdoor stage in your cap and gown, hear your name and future plans read, and pause for pictures as you receive your diploma. This will be in place of the traditional “walking the stage” in our auditorium.

You and your family may arrive at 11 AM. Graduates may arrive in a vehicle with those who reside in the same household. Graduates who reside in more than one home may have the members of the second home follow in a separate vehicle. You will need to coordinate your arrival time prior to entering the line up on our MS/HS campus. In other words, if you have two vehicles (one from each household), meet down the road and enter the processional line at the same time. Once cars enter the line, there will not be an opportunity to change order. The line begins at the Middle School parking lot entrance.

To make the process run smoothly and to limit the wait time, please consider the following suggested arrival times: **graduates with last names beginning A-G 11 AM, H-M 12 PM, and N-Z 1 PM.** (You will not be turned away if you are out of order or stacked together with friends or relatives in separate cars.)

The ceremony will be livestreamed on our *Pioneer Central High School* Facebook page and later posted on our *Pioneer TV* YouTube channel.

See guidelines and directions on the next page.

The following are NYS guidelines that we are required to follow. Information is directly from the NYS memo "Updated Interim Guidance for Graduation Celebrations During the COVID-19 State of Emergency Updated June 14, 2020."

- Drive-through Ceremonies:

- o Students, and only immediate family members who reside in the same household, should arrive by assigned time and leave after their individual recognition.
- o Individual students may come to the school at prearranged times, may exit the car individually, in their cap and gown if available, to walk across a stage in their cap and gown and have a photo taken. However single-direction flow should be marked to cross the graduation stage or take a photo, and the standing locations of graduates waiting to cross the graduation stage or take a photo must be clearly marked to ensure all individuals remain at least six feet apart at all times.
- o Any high-touch surfaces (e.g. podium, handrail) must be frequently cleaned and disinfected.
- o There must not be person-to-person contact during the celebration. Individuals may not shake hands.
- o Diplomas, or any other items, can only be handed from one designated individual (e.g. superintendent, principal) to students if both individuals are wearing a face covering and either using gloves or applying hand sanitizer between touching of objects. Otherwise, diplomas, or any other items, should be pre-arranged for students to retrieve them without direct interaction with other individuals.
- o Any individual in attendance must wear a mask or face covering at all times, if they are over age two and able to medically tolerate a covering. Individual students may temporarily remove their masks or face coverings while crossing the award area or having their individual photo taken by the district or school.
- o These events will require precise scheduling, traffic control, and school safety personnel, etc. and may be appropriate for small to medium-sized graduating classes in less trafficked areas.

The Pioneer Central School District Drive-through plan is on the next page and complies with the guidelines above.

## Drive-Through Procedure

1. Enter the drive-through line at the MS parking lot entrance. A school resource officer will guide you in and answer questions.
2. Drive to the HS via the connecting road and stop at the next school resource officer to await the next step.
3. When instructed, drive to the next school official and stop to give your name. The official will radio your name to be announced.
4. You will proceed to the next school official, posted near the crosswalk in front of the High School, who will give you your diploma, any awards/scholarships you received, and other items. At this time, the graduate will exit the vehicle and walk to Superintendent Halsey and Principal Schultz. During this time, the vehicle will pull up to the crosswalk where all the people in the vehicle will have a view of the outdoor stage.
5. The graduate will proceed to the stage and stand next to the diploma display while his or her name and future plans are read.
6. The graduate will then walk back to the vehicle and exit the High School campus.

