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PRINCIPAL

Northwestern High School

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Northwestern Graduation Ceremony June 24, 2021, 10:00 AM

Rock Hill Sports & Event Center
326 Technology Way
Rock Hill, SC 29730

Dear Parents of Graduating Seniors:

It has been a pleasure and an honor for us to have worked with the graduating class of 2021. Northwestern's graduation ceremony has been designed to recognize the academic accomplishments of these graduates by presenting a dignified ceremony representative of their public education experience in Rock Hill Schools. We want this occasion to hold lasting memories for our entire community.

Please be aware of the following ceremony guidelines and viewing options:

- Admission will be based upon 2 tickets per family. **No person, including infants and children, will be admitted without a ticket.** Seating will be limited to defined areas, and spectators will be seated as they enter the Rock Hill Sports & Event Center.
- **Northwestern spectators can be admitted to the Rock Hill Sports & Event Center for seating as early as 9:00 AM. Additional information regarding late arrival is listed below within entry/exit. Parents and guests must be seated no later than 9:45 AM.**
- **Live-streaming for each commencement ceremony will be professionally produced and streamed live on the Rock Hill Schools website at <https://www.rock-hill.k12.sc.us/graduation>, on the Rock Hill Schools Facebook page, on the Rock Hill Schools YouTube channel (online, mobile, and TV app), and on Roku TV (search for Boxcast app and then choose Rock Hill Schools).**

All spectators must wear appropriate dress for the occasion (semiformal attire or business casual). ***Spectators wearing inappropriate clothing may be denied entry. (See below)***

- ***No flash or video photography will be permitted in the Rock Hill Sports & Event Center.*** Spectators may take pictures or videos from their seats but are asked not to hinder the sight of other spectators.
- Spectators will be allowed to purchase pictures of the ceremony from professional photographers at a later date. Graduates will be given information on how and when to purchase these items.
- Graduation security, ticket collection, and parking will be handled by uniformed officers.
- Disturbances during the ceremony will not be tolerated. Spectators will be instructed to hold all applause until the last graduate's name is called. ***No air horns, cowbells, sirens, or other noisemakers will be allowed in the Center. Spectators who disrupt the ceremony will be subject to removal and/or arrest.***

Please review these additional details regarding our ceremony.

Entrance/Exit of Guests:

Guests should enter the Event Center from the main entrance doors. Signs will be posted. Guests will undergo a health screening and security check, then be seated on the main gym floor in chairs set up for the event. Social distancing will be enforced, and masks are encouraged. The district clear bag policy will be in effect.

Guests are encouraged to arrive at least thirty minutes before the school's commencement ceremony to complete screening and security checks. Cleaning and sanitizing will take place between each ceremony, and doors will open only one hour prior to the start time. Any late guests will be escorted to a special section of seating to not disturb the ceremony. **The Event Center doors will close fifteen minutes after the start of the ceremony (10:15 AM); any guests arriving after this time will be turned away.**

Entrance/Exit of Graduates:

Graduates will be lined up at the school and escorted into the Event Center building from buses parked at the back of the building. At the end of the ceremony, graduates will recess and ride back to the school where their cars are parked. This is being done to limit graduate wait time, facilitate the organized entrance/exit of graduates, encourage efficient entrance/exit of guests, and allow more parking for guests. Any graduate or family with concerns about the bus transportation should contact their school's principal.

Behavior (Important Information):

While this year's Spring Commencement ceremony is being held at the Event Center with additional safety precautions in place, traditional expectations for graduate and guest behavior are in place. Over time, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and students have helped establish, revise, and improve our commencement procedures. The following set of common expectations and guidelines are in place just as they are in a normal year:

- Admission to the ceremony is by ticket only.
- Spectators should dress appropriately (no shorts, t-shirts, or tank tops).
- Spectators should not leave their seats to take pictures during the ceremony.
- **Spectators and graduates should not clap, shout, or stand until all graduates have crossed the stage allowing each graduate's name to be heard.**

Expectations for Guests:

To help ensure a safe, orderly, and dignified ceremony, Rock Hill Schools security and police will be on duty. These officers will assist in preserving the graduation decorum and enforcing communicated guidelines. Guests that do not comply with the guidelines mentioned above are subject to be removed or disallowed from attending the ceremony.

Our goal is not to discourage the joy of the occasion; our goal is to recognize hundreds of students in the most dignified, respectful, and efficient way possible. Graduation from high school is an important milestone for the seniors, their families, and each school. We believe that maintaining decorum while honoring these graduates is important and appropriate.

Parking:

There are three options for parking:

- Free parking is available in the City of Rock Hill's multi-level University Center Parking Deck A next to the Event Center. Signage on White Street marks the entrance to Parking Deck A.
- Additional free parking is available in the Springs Creative parking lots at the corner of White Street/Wilson Street and White Street/Laurel Street.
- Alternatively, guests may also park for free at the District Three Stadium on Cherry Road. A shuttle bus will run between the Event Center and Stadium before, after, and throughout the event.

Vehicles parked in other nearby parking lots are subject to tow at the owner's expense.

Thank you for your continued support.

Hezekiah Massey III
Principal