

June 15, 2020

Good Morning Class of 2020 Families,

I hope this message continues to find you well during these difficult times. We have been working hard to make graduation for the Class of 2020 a special event while still adhering to the regulations and guidelines issued by the State of Connecticut. Governor Lamont's most recently updated guidelines from Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> allow a gathering of no more than 150 people, including graduates, families and staff. With over 400 graduates, this regulation would not allow Hamden High's graduates to assemble together and would also limit only two family members to witness one of the most important milestones of their student's life. We want to offer a better event for our graduates and their families.

A meeting was convened on June 9th with Central Office Administration, Town Officials and Quinnipiack Valley Health District (QVHD) to discuss creative graduation options that meet our school community's needs. *Please note there is no guarantee that an August graduation would not have the same public health restrictions as July.* The graduation plan described below has been approved by QVHD and has received the support from our Senior Class Officers.

### **Class of 2020 Graduation Ceremony Plan**

Virtual Video Presentation of Ceremonial Portion: This portion of the ceremony will include: student speeches, Principal Gannon's address, salutation from M. Arturo Perez-Cabello, Board of Education Chairperson, and well wishes from Mayor Leng and Superintendent Goeler, which will be pre-recorded and published.

Distribution of Diplomas: For the conferring and distribution of diplomas to graduates, we will be holding a drive-through ceremony at the Town Center Park. Students will be assigned by their House (alphabet) at designated times throughout the day on **Wednesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>** (rain date July 10<sup>th</sup>) beginning at 9:00 a.m. Additional information will be sent over the next couple weeks. We are working to have this portion of the ceremony live-streamed throughout the day and broadcasted on FM radio.

### **Please adhere to the following protocols:**

- Each graduate will be allowed up to two cars for the ceremony. Both cars are required to process together (one after the other) with the graduate riding in the first car on the driver's side (behind the driver).
- Please contact Mr. Trauner ([strauner@hamden.org](mailto:strauner@hamden.org)) or Mrs. DeCosta ([ddecosta@hamden.org](mailto:ddecosta@hamden.org)) if transportation is needed for your graduate and family.
- Cars will assemble at designated times based on the student's last name and will be organized in order of arrival by administration and school security.
- There will be 2 check-in stations that cars will move through before proceeding to the stage.
- Once graduates arrive at the 2<sup>nd</sup> station, they will exit the car. Graduates must be wearing a face covering when they exit the car.

- Graduates will proceed to the stage. The diploma will be placed on a table at a designated spot for the graduate. The graduate's name will be called over the loudspeaker. At that time the graduate will have a professional photo taken and may remove their face covering and turn their tassel. No congratulatory handshakes will be exchanged.
- All other members of the graduate's party must remain in the car(s).

If any person in the graduate's family (including graduate) is feeling ill on the day of graduation, please do not participate in the July 8<sup>th</sup> ceremony (or rain date).

We will continue to provide detailed information regarding our graduation ceremony as it becomes available. I know this is not the outcome many of our graduates were hoping for, but it is the safest and most inclusive plan we have been able to conceive in consultation with Town Officials, Quinipiack Valley Health District (QVHD) and Senior Class Officers.

Thank you for your patience, support and understanding as we worked through the safest graduation we could plan under these challenging circumstances.

Be well.

Principal Gannon