

Ooltewah High Class of 2020 Graduation Guidelines

Seniors and Parents,

We are very excited to be able to host a graduation ceremony this year. We know our seniors as well as our staff and families have struggled through the last few months not being able to celebrate many milestones in person. The HCS high schools along with central office administration have worked diligently as a focused unit to be able to come together and offer this milestone for our seniors that we love so well. We know this is not the situation we all envisioned, but a lot of love, consideration and planning for safety has gone into putting this event together. We ask that everyone please adhere to the following guidelines put forth by HCS and the CDC in partnership with OHS.

- In order to participate in Graduation Commencement, all student dues, holds, or fees must be satisfied and cleared by the school. Tickets will be given only when all obligations are cleared. This includes Chromebooks. An opportunity to pay holds will be available for students when they pick up their graduation packet.
- Graduation commencement will take place Saturday, June 27th at 9:00am at the Ooltewah High School Football Stadium. The stadium will open at 7:30am.
- With respect to the possibilities of rain, we will treat it as we would a football game. If it is raining close to the start of the ceremony, we will be there, ready to go when it clears.
- If it begins raining during the ceremony, and there is no lightning, the ceremony will continue. We ask that all audience members please bring a poncho if there is a forecast of rain. We do not want anyone's view to be blocked throughout the course of the event. We want to respect every family's right to see their student walk across the stage.
- There will be no concessions available for family and guests. This includes water. This is a requirement for all HCS graduations. However, we will be providing each graduate with a bottle of water at their seat. Restroom facilities will only be available in the event of an emergency. We will have a cleaning staff on site to sanitize the restroom.
- Each graduate will receive four tickets for family members and guests. Tickets will be printed for each school and will be available for pickup at Ooltewah High School on June 23rd-25th, from 9:00am to 12:00pm. Tickets will be issued to either the student or direct family member or guardian who is listed on PowerSchool. The person picking up the tickets will sign for them when received. We will ***not*** give your tickets to a third-party person claiming to have permission to pick-up your tickets.

- In keeping with HCS guidelines, we will not be having a practice for the ceremony. Seniors have participated in a Zoom meeting for details and will be given instructions upon arrival for the flow of the event.

- Graduates are to arrive at the tennis courts, ready to step foot on the field ***at 7:30am and no later than 8:00am***. Please do not arrive any later than this time. We cannot afford to delay, while waiting on graduates to arrive.

- The graduation ceremony will be live-streamed. Details and internet links will be forthcoming. If by remote possibility that live-streaming is interrupted, we will be video recording the event. The recorded production will be posted as soon as possible after the ceremony. That link will be posted on our social media sites as well as our YouTube Channel, HootTV.

- Graduates will park in the faculty lot behind the school. If a graduate is riding with a parent or other family member or guest, then they may be dropped off at the tennis courts upon entry to the campus.

- Graduates need to bring a mask. We will have you wear them as we organize and assemble at the tennis courts prior to the event, as well as when you exit the field. If you limit wearing the masks at these two points, then any mask will do, decorated or not, as long as it is clean and appropriate in design. If you want or need to wear a mask throughout the whole ceremony, including receiving your diploma, then by all means, please do. However, we will require these to be free of custom design or verbiage. They will need to be of solid color; white, gray or red.

- Upon arrival, graduates will receive a name card with a number on it. Graduates will sit in the seat with their corresponding card. We'll have that organized upon your arrival.

- Parents and guests will park in other parking lots indicated on the attached map. Parking is very limited for the number of graduates and guests we have participating. We ask that all family/guests per graduate come in one car.

- The parking lot located directly to the right as you enter campus and inside the stadium gates will be reserved for handicap visitors. Personnel will be on site to help with parking in this area.

- All family and guests must have a ticket to enter the campus/event, regardless of age. Tickets will be checked at the entrance of the campus and those who do not have a ticket will be required to leave. We know this is a hardship on some families, but we do not have the physical space to host more than the allotted tickets we have disbursed. We have had to bring in portable bleachers to accommodate all safety guidelines and allow our graduates to have four guests.

- All family and guests must enter at the designated gates. As family and guests enter the stadium, please make sure you follow proper CDC guidelines. Avoid clustering. Please bring your own masks, if possible. The wearing of masks at all times is strongly encouraged; however, once you are inside and socially distanced, then wearing a mask is optional. Masks must be worn when entering the stadium and when leaving the stadium and if you have to use the restroom. All efforts are to maintain a distance of at least six feet between other guests and families. We encourage you to bring hand sanitizer as well.

- Family and guests must ***not*** enter the football field at any time.

LifeTouch photography will be stage-side to photograph each senior as they leave the stage. To view and order a graduate's picture, go to <https://events.lifetouch.com>

Graduation is a dignified ceremony and it is recommended that all graduates dress in semi-formal attire. Gentlemen will need to wear dress pants (no shorts). Pants can khaki or any other solid color that coordinates with the OHS cap and gown. Please wear a dress shirt, white or a solid color that coordinates. A tie is optional. Ladies, please wear one of the following: a dress that does not extend below the graduation gown; a skirt and blouse ensemble, or pantsuit. Appropriate height shoes; dress shoes, sandals with back straps, wedges, and flats are also recommended. Avoid high heels. The football field is very soft and heels will not function well. Keep this in mind when considering footwear.

This is sacred event rich with tradition and graduation caps will ***not*** be decorated. No sunglasses, necklaces, beads, pins, buttons, etc. are permitted on the graduation gown or cap. All cords and stoles must be approved (IB, Honor Society, Beta Club, Cord of Courage are the only acceptable regalia).

In accordance with CDC guidelines, we respectfully ask everyone to leave campus in a timely manner once the graduation ceremony is completed. Graduates will exit the stadium the same way they entered. We ask that they return to their cars and immediately exit the campus.

We look forward to seeing you Saturday morning!

Blessings,

OHS Administration