

District Communication regarding graduation ceremony



SIERRA SANDS Unified School District

April 23, 2020

Dear BHS Parent/Guardian and BHS senior students,

I am writing to assure you that much time and effort is being invested into what high school graduation looks like this year. If you are a parent of a senior, you are suffering a big disruption to your prior family plans and expectations for the 75th BHS Commencement Ceremony.

As in all years, we have a BHS Graduation Committee, which is comprised of staff and students. As you can imagine, they have been working very hard to design and implement some type of celebration that honors our graduating seniors, while also complying with state, county, and local orders related to COVID-19.

- You may be reading or seeing in the news that many high schools across the state are simply postponing a traditional ceremony to mid-summer or December. While we are closely considering that as an option, we are concerned that many students would, ultimately, be unavailable to participate in a future, unknown-as-of-yet-date.

- Another plan that many high schools are embracing is a 100% virtual ceremony of sorts. We are closely considering this option as well.

- A third possibility, **one that our BHS graduation committee is currently favoring**, is a carefully designed opportunity where students can receive their diploma in person on May 29. We are putting the finishing touches on a comprehensive plan that would stage students and members of their family throughout the day, ensuring social distancing and a focus on health and safety for all. We would utilize our gymnasium and we would also livestream the event.

Summary:

Please know that everyone at BHS, as well as district leadership, views the graduation ceremony as a key priority as we head into the month of May. The time-honored passage into adulthood is an uplifting ceremony, and we will be sure to create an adapted means to make something special happen, in spite of the challenges facing all of us. At my direction, specific plans have not yet been published due to the importance of planning something that is appropriate and sanctioned by state and regional authorities.

You can expect continued communication from the Burroughs High School team. It makes sense for us to monitor the evolution of the state and county's response to the pandemic health crisis and to **put into place the best plan for May 29** as we learn more information from health professionals.

We will publish the optimal graduation ceremony plan no later than May 8. In the meantime, be well and stay healthy.

Sincerely,
Dave Ostash
Superintendent