

Good afternoon Class of 2017!

I am glad to have the opportunity to talk to you today

You should have received three pieces of paper when you walked in here today. One is the Graduation Calendar and the other is a half-sheet called the Participation Opt-Out Form. The third is a form to order a graduation yard sign.

I will talk about the Opt Out Form first.

If you know right now that you will not be attending either Baccalaureate or Graduation, we ask that you take the form home, print your name in the appropriate event that you will be missing, get a parent to sign it and then bring it back to school by Friday, 4/21. Your 3rd period teacher will collect these until Friday, 4/21.

There will not be many of you that do this but we would like to have an accurate count for both events so that we can plan accordingly. This is very important as it allows us to have the correct plan for graduation when it comes to seating and calling of the names.

The bullets on the front of the calendar answer quite a number of questions that you have about graduation.

Remember, graduation is not about you as an individual. It is about the Class of 2017. We will talk more about that at practices but that is why we have some of the rules that we have regarding graduation. Your

family is coming to hear one thing and that is your name as you get your diploma. You will shake hands with 1SGT Bell, you will proceed to get your diploma from Dr. Lane, and you will shake his hand and then proceed to shake the hands of the other distinguished guests at our graduation. You will walk across the stage and as you exit the stage you will be stopped for a picture to be made. Once your picture is made you will walk back with the rest of your class. While all of that is going on, someone else's name is being called. You will be asked to behave in a manner of respect and decorum as you cross the stage because one, you are representing the Fayette County High School Class of 2017 and two, because if you do anything that draws attention to yourself as you are crossing the stage you have just robbed someone else of their one moment. Again, we will talk about this in great detail at practice but I wanted you to begin to understand why we do what we do at graduation. **For this reason, you are asked not to decorate your cap. It must remain in the condition that you received it in, to be worn at graduation.**

Gentlemen must wear black or dark trousers, black or dark dress shoes, a white dress shirt and a tie under your gown. The tie should be a regular necktie or bow tie of a dark color. Any appropriate tie is fine to include bow ties.

Ladies must wear a black or dark colored dress with black or dark shoes. A low heel or flat shoe is suggested. You will be walking the length of the football field as you march in. You don't want your foot getting stuck in the ground as you walk.

The attire mentioned above is appropriate for both Graduation and Baccalaureate.

Graduation and Baccalaureate practice times are listed on this calendar. Those times are nonnegotiable. You need to be on time for your practices and plan to stay until noon. Of course, we will try to get you out of there before noon but you need to plan to stay until noon. This applies to leaving to go to work, for an appointment, this includes hair appointments, etc. We are telling you enough time in advance that you should make arrangements to arrive on time for practice and stay until noon.

Also, it will be hot for graduation practice. We ask that you dress appropriately but please dress for the heat. It is okay to wear shorts and hats for graduation practice. Also, bring water if you need water. Baccalaureate practice will be inside a church so you should dress appropriately for that practice as well to include not wearing a hat. Once you have left the campus on 5/18, you should not return to campus unless you have to take exams on that Friday and/or Monday. You cannot come back and visit or have lunch. You cannot come back on campus.

The last thing that I want to draw your attention to on this calendar is this bullet about obligations. You will not be allowed to practice for graduation if you have not taken care of your obligations. You can take care of obligations through the downstairs assistant principal's office unless it is a Touchdown Club or Band obligation. For those two

obligations you must go directly to those entities to take care of them, we cannot help you with those two obligations.

Currently, there are 29 of you on the obligation list. However, that will change a little at the end of the semester. It is your responsibility and not your parents to insure that all items issued to you are returned. If that does not happen, your name will be added to the obligation list. It will be added at a time when money will most likely be being spent in other areas. Do not put yourself or your parents in a situation where you have to make a decision between walking in graduation or paying for your graduation party or graduation presents. Take care of these items now. If you know that you have lost an item, start making arrangements now so that you will have the money when your name gets added to the list. If you know that you owe for AP testing, start getting that money together now because that will also get added to the obligation list at the end of the semester. If you have not paid your senior dues, you will not get a cap and gown. You cannot participate in graduation if you do not have a school-issued cap and gown.

Students, there are many reasons that you may not participate in graduation and/or baccalaureate and they are all your decisions.

Please listen closely as I go over them all:

- **You can choose simply not to attend and fill out the opt/out form**
- **You can choose to not attend practice for graduation or practice for baccalaureate.** If you do not come to practice or come late to practice you will not be permitted to participate in the events. Let

me repeat this. If you do not come to practice or come late to practice you will not be permitted to participate in the events.

- **You can choose to not handle your academic business accordingly these last few weeks of school.** If you do not have the qualifications for graduation, you will not participate in graduation
- **You can choose to make an unwise behavior decision.** We will not have people at any of our practices that demonstrate to us by their behavior that they can't handle the practice. If you make a behavior error, you may be told that you cannot participate in graduation and/or baccalaureate. Let me be clear right here. If you behave in a manner that is disrespectful to Fayette County High School or the Class of 2017 as well as any other behavior error at this time of you year, you may lose your privilege of walking across the stage on 5/26.
- **You may choose not to handle your obligations.** Students with obligations will not participate in baccalaureate and/or graduation
- **You may make a poor choice on graduation day.** Any student who fails to dress as indicated, who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol or exhibits inappropriate behaviors will be pulled from the exercises and not permitted to participate.

All of the items I just mentioned all revolve around decisions you make. I hope that you continue to make the good decisions that you have all year and that you are able to participate as a representative of the Fayette County High School Class of 2017