



March 27th, 2020

Dear Dragons of 2020 and their families,

We know that this must be an especially difficult time for you and that you are likely experiencing a range of emotions as we navigate this unforeseen situation. Without question, this is not the senior year that anyone ever expected, and we are heartbroken for you. Despite this setback, I want to assure you that we are doing everything possible to ensure your senior year is special and that you receive the recognition that you have earned and deserve.

We also know that you have many questions about graduation, from requirements to commencement exercises. Included below are answers to these questions that I hope will help to ease and address any of your concerns in this regard.

Graduation Requirements

The Virginia Department of Education has shared with us their commitment that students on-track for graduation prior to the closing of schools will graduate. More specific details are included below. In addition, please note that all students, including seniors, are expected to complete all Learn-from-Home assignments for the remainder of the school year.

The following graduation requirements can be waived:

- Students currently enrolled in a course for which they need a standard or verified credit in order to graduate;
- Students who have successfully completed a course required for graduation, but have not earned the associated verified credit;
- Students who have not completed the student-selected test;
- Students who are currently enrolled in or have previously completed a course leading to a Career and Technical Education (CTE) credential necessary for a Standard Diploma but have not yet earned the credential.

The Code of Virginia outlines several credit-based graduation requirements. We are working closely with the Virginia Department of Education to ensure we adhere to the processes necessary to request a waiver to the following requirements:

- Students who have not completed the United States and Virginia history course;
- Students who have not completed a fine or performing arts or career and technical education course;
- Students in the second of sequential courses;
- Students who have not completed an economics and personal finance course.

The following graduation requirements will require action by the General Assembly in order to be waived:

- Students who have not completed training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and
- Students who have not completed a virtual course.

We are eager to work with individual students and families who have concerns about fulfilling graduation requirements. Please reach out directly to your school counselor or administrator who can assist you in reviewing your progress and help you finish strong!

Graduation Ceremony:

We are committed to celebrating the accomplishments of the class of 2020. Our sincere desire is to hold the traditional graduation ceremony. While we cannot predict when the Governor will lift the current restrictions on large gatherings, we are still preparing all logistics for the June 12th ceremony. Please keep in mind, that if we can hold this ceremony, then graduate guest numbers will be significantly decreased. However, if restrictions remain in place longer than anticipated and an in-person ceremony is not possible we are considering virtual graduation ceremony options. We will share further details as we know more.

I hope these updates will help to address the many questions and concerns you may have regarding graduation. We will continue to provide you with regular updates regarding graduation and a variety of other topics as they become available. If you have additional questions that were not addressed, please contact your school counselor or an administrator. Please check back here for the most up-to-date information.

As always, thank you for your continued patience, support, and understanding through these challenging times. Together, I know we will overcome these obstacles and turn them into the most positive outcomes, experiences, and memories for our students possible.

With deepest gratitude,

Dr. Brendon L. Albôn
Executive Director
Appomattox Regional Governor's School