

May 2017

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Graduating Seniors of the Class of 2016,

The end of this school year signals the beginning of unprecedented excitement and great anticipation for our seniors at North Port High School. I want to take this opportunity to wish you the best in all of your future endeavors. You have been a great senior class and have helped carry on the traditions of North Port High School with great pride. Thank you for your creativity, compassion, enthusiasm, cooperation and support.

I am sure you are experiencing a multitude of emotions at this time. As you leave North Port High School and pursue your goals, you may be uncertain of what the future will bring. These feelings are natural, but I am confident that North Port High School has provided you the education necessary to reach the next level. You now need to do your part by setting challenging goals, exhibiting a strong work ethic, always striving to be the best that you can be, and never giving up. I'm sure you are looking forward to college, technical school, the military, or the work force.

**MANDATORY Graduation Practice – Wednesday, May 31, 11:00 AM**

A North Port High School policy is that all seniors must be at practice to participate in the graduation ceremony. The next milestone is graduation. **Mandatory graduation practice** will be Wednesday morning, May 31. **We will begin promptly at 11:00 AM in the PAC.** Following the assembly, we move to the gymnasium where you will learn about the graduation ceremony and receive your guest tickets. If you have forgotten the process for ticket distribution, please visit our website that has all the details.

**Graduation – Thursday, June 1**

***Information for Graduating Seniors***

**You are expected to be at the Potter Building** just west of Robarts Arena (located at the Sarasota Fairgrounds, 3000 Ringling Blvd, Sarasota 34237) **by 6:15 PM** on Thursday, June 1. The ceremony will begin at 7:30 PM, and the doors to the arena will be open for ticket holders to enter at 6:30 PM. **Traffic will be heavy on Fruitville Road as you enter to park.** Tickets are issued for graduation. However, seating for your guests is open and on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**Expectations:** The actual graduation ceremony will take about two hours. During that time, we expect that our students will act in a mature manner. Any behavior which detracts from the dignity of the ceremony will result in the exclusion of that student from the ceremony. Each graduate will have family and friends in the audience of approximately 4,000 people. Many will have traveled a great distance to be there. Inappropriate, disruptive behavior can mar the entire ceremony and detract from the enjoyment of the graduates and their guests. Graduation from high school is an event which comes only once in a lifetime. The graduation ceremony is to acknowledge both the efforts of the student and the community through their support in providing thirteen years of public education. It is a time to allow family, friends, and the community to share in students' achievements. Students, as well as parents, relatives and friends, deserve a graduation ceremony that is dignified and memorable.

### **Graduating seniors are reminded of the following:**

1. Do not bring cell phones, cameras, or personal belongings—leave them locked up in your car or with your parents. There will be no storage at Robarts Arena.
2. Graduating seniors should arrive at the Arena in plenty of time to get to the Potter building (to the west of Robarts Arena) no later than 6:30 PM.
3. Please end the ceremony in an orderly and dignified recessional. Congratulate your friends backstage.
4. **Dress the part for an once-in-a-lifetime event that's rich in style and traditions:** The general guideline is that the graduate should select clothing and shoes customarily worn at important occasions. Students should not wear jeans, sandals, sneakers, or shorts. Students may not write on graduation gowns. All students participating in the ceremony must wear a cap and gown. Here are some important details:
  - Please put on your cap and gown immediately upon arrival to the Potter building.
  - Tassels are worn on the right side of the cap and switched to the left side when Superintendent Todd Bowden says, "I declare you graduates of North Port High School."
  - The graduation cap is worn flat on the head, parallel to the floor. The front point of the cap should be centered on the forehead.
  - Men generally wear dark trousers and dress shirts and ties under their graduation gowns. (no work boots or tennis shoes.)
  - Women generally wear lightweight dresses or blouses and skirts that do not hang below their graduation gowns. They can also wear a detachable white collar that adds a more finished, decorative touch.
  - Flowers and jewelry should not be worn on the academic gown.
  - No sunglasses, head coverings, do-rags allowed other than your graduation cap.
5. Upon shaking hands with our principal, Mr. Johnson, or one of the assistant principals at graduation, you are invited to hand them one or more wallet-sized senior pictures of yourself. On the back of the picture, write a message to thank any faculty member who has had an impact on you while at NPHS. We will be sure to get them to the designated faculty members!

### ***Information for Guests***

Tickets ARE required to enter Robarts Arena. The doors will open at 6:30 PM, and the graduation ceremony will begin at 7:30 PM. **Please arrive well in advance of the 7:30 start time.** Seat selection is on a first-come, first-served basis. Floor seating is available for handicapped or infirmed parents or grandparents, but it is not reserved. There is ample easy-access parking as well as handicapped areas adjacent to the Arena.

### **Graduation Etiquette**

We make a special appeal to parents of our seniors to support us in emphasizing that this is a ceremony belonging to over five hundred students and their families. Each individual should strive to preserve the dignity of this occasion. The seniors of 2017 have been and will continue to be a truly outstanding group of young people. Every attempt has been made to make this an occasion that everyone will always remember with great joy and honor. For the best possible commencement exercises please make note of the following:

- Make sure that when you show pride in your graduate, you aren't drowning out the recognition of another.
- Life's milestones deserve everyone's full attention. Turn off your cell phones and resist the urge to text until the entire ceremony is over. Remain in your seat until the last students receive their diplomas so that they feel properly acknowledged.
- Please do not whistle, blow an air horn, yell or call out individual names. This is embarrassing to all and takes away from the dignity of the ceremony.
- Please remain seated for the entire program. Please do not leave after your senior has been honored. The program will last approximately two hours, and we wish to honor each one of the graduates.

**Photographs:** *Lifetouch* will professionally photograph each student as she/he enters the stage from the center AND exits the stage from the sides.

If a family member or guest takes pictures during the ceremony, we ask that he/she be mindful and respectful of those who are seated. It distracts from the ceremony and prevents others from being able to see their child walk across the stage when someone stands or comes to the stage for pictures.

**Safety and Security:** North Port Police officers and Sarasota County Sheriff's deputies will be on duty in all areas of the arena for your assistance. As well, numerous members of the North Port High School faculty and staff will be on hand to ensure a smooth and memorable ceremony.

Thank you for this opportunity to convey information pertaining to graduation. We hope that this time will prove to be an exciting and memorable time of your life. Let all of us work together to share our pride in the Class of 2017.

Congratulations, Class of 2017!

Sincerely,

Brandon Johnson, Principal  
North Port High School