

Dear Parents and Seniors,

Thanks to so many of you who responded to our survey to help us plan for graduation in this unusual school year. Based on your responses, and the information sent to us by others, we can finally confirm our graduation dates! We originally announced possible dates in early August so people could make plans, believing August had a significant chance to work for families and the hopefully reduced progression of the COVID-19 virus. However, we found out that many students are already gone by then for military service, reporting to colleges and universities (especially if they are doing athletics or other activities), and other commitments or reasons similar to these issues. Therefore, to celebrate this important occasion for as many students as possible, we are moving the dates to July.

Following the guidelines for the Mesa County Safer at Home initiative, which does not allow large gatherings until at least July 1, and taking into account the number of students who could not participate in an August graduation ceremony, we have determined the following graduation schedule for our high schools.

July 10: 8:30 a.m. CHS	July 11: 8:30 a.m. GJHS	July 13: 8:30 a.m. GRA
8:00 p.m. PHS	8:00 p.m. FMHS	8:00 p.m. R-5

All six of the above graduations will take place at Stocker Stadium.

Based on the need for social distancing, the number of cases of COVID-19, and the guidelines that may be in place in mid-summer, the ceremony will be done in one of two ways:

- 1) Using the type of graduation ceremony done by the United States Air Force Academy a few weeks ago, where the ceremony itself is traditional but with students, staff and Board of Education members only present, with no audience or guests, but live-streamed so parents, family members, and friends of graduates can watch the students cross the stage and accept their diplomas. That video will be made available to all families who were not able to see the live streamed version or want one for a keepsake.

OR...

- 2) A more traditional ceremony where guests will be allowed, but perhaps limited to 2 guests per graduate. That number could be revisited as we get closer to the event, based on the circumstances and the risks as reported by Mesa County Public Health. In other words, we may be able to increase the number of guests that a graduate may be able to have present. This event will also be live-streamed and recorded, as more than the number of guests that are allowed to be present to celebrate this important event may want to view it.

No later than June 22, Option 1 or 2 will be determined and announced by the district. If option 2 is chosen, tickets will be issued, at no charge, for the designated number of guests.

If a school is not listed here, it is because they have a smaller group of students than our bigger high schools but will still need to follow the same social distancing and crowd size guidelines. Principals from these schools will reach out to students and families with more details.

We know that no schedule will meet the needs of all families and circumstances and apologize for any inconvenience this may cause graduates or families. We feel this is the best plan for the majority of our students and to accommodate the lack of certainty associated with scheduling during this time. The early morning and late evening times that were assigned will help accommodate the warm temperatures that are common in July.

Please feel free to contact our office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Diana Sirko

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