



**Orange Township
Public Schools**
Orange High School
Mr. Jason Belton, Principal



Gerald Fitzhugh, II, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Anthony Frantantoni , Assistant Principal-Grade 10
Ms. Carrie Halstead, Assistant Principal-Grade 12
Mrs. Kavita Cassimiro, Assistant Principal-Grade 11
Mr. Lyle Wallace, Assistant Principal-Grade 10/ Alternative Ed

June 12, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

On behalf of Orange High School staff and students, as well as the entire Orange Township Public School community, I congratulate your child on reaching this point in their academic career. This year has been like no other, one we will never forget.

We began the 2019-2020 school year with so much excitement. As we progressed through the first and second marking cycles, things were moving along quite nicely. We left for winter break in need of rest and relaxation, to only return to the news that a deadly virus was affecting parts of our nation. We had no idea how much our lives would change. Then the COVID 19 pandemic became a reality in New Jersey. First, we were forced to cancel the senior trip in the beginning of March. Before we knew it, we were transitioning to distance learning. Our seniors pushed through to optimize all the possibilities of finishing their senior year while facing the challenges of our new normal head-on. While students were completing the third marking cycle and reassessing their college decisions, we held out hope for as long as we could for our Senior Prom. We wanted to have a beautiful night of celebration for our House 12 students. Finally, due to the restrictions of Governor Murphy's executive order of social distancing, we were forced to cancel Prom for the first time ever (that we can remember, anyway). Then we began to look toward graduation and how we would celebrate our graduates. Please keep in mind on May 4, 2020, Governor Murphy extended the emergency school closure through June 30, 2020. Even still, we celebrated our seniors virtually as this senior class amassed the largest scholarship amount in Orange Township Public School history with a total of over 18,000,000.00 dollars. We certainly have a lot to be proud of.

I am pleased to announce that **WE WILL CELEBRATE OUR** graduates. Our senior class of 2020 deserves the best celebration we could ever give them within the constraints of the current executive order for the State of New Jersey. We will however, host graduation different than we have over the years. The remainder of this letter outlines how we will celebrate those who worked to overcome every obstacle thrown at them during these unprecedented times and have earned the necessary requirements for a New Jersey High School Diploma from Orange High School.

Our graduation this year will be virtual and will be streamed for the whole world to see on Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 6:00 pm from the Orange Township Public School's You Tube Channel. A link to the graduation ceremony will be issued through our District webpage, as well as our Orange Public Schools Facebook Page, and Twitter pages. It will also be aired on Comcast Channel 35 in Orange, NJ. However, part of this celebration is the filming of a drive-by graduation procession so our seniors will be recognized as they drive down Central Avenue. Students are expected to wear their caps and gowns...We are going to celebrate them in the filming will take place as follows:

The Procession for the Drive-By Filming and Expectations for Participation:

- The graduation processional will take place on Thursday, June 18, 2020.
- Families and students will assemble at 4:45 pm on Central Avenue across the street from Orange Park facing West (toward Walgreens). **It is the expectation that you are on time. In addition, you MUST remain in your cars. We are not permitting co-mingling of any sort. Remember, we have to remain safe. It is also the expectation that masks are present in your cars. We are going to show all the cities in Essex County that we know how to follow rules and procedures. We are placing our trust in you to follow all of the procedures that we put in place.**
- The Graduation Procession will be led by Orange Police Department.
- The Procession will travel (West) on Central Avenue and make a left onto Carteret Place.
- The Procession will then travel (South) onto Carteret Place for 500 feet.
- Next, the Graduation Procession will make a right on Clarendon Place (west).
- The Procession will then travel down Lincoln Avenue (north) passing Orange High School.
- Finally, each car will stop at the corner of Central Avenue and Lincoln Avenue, the graduate will hand the staff member at the corner the index card they receive at the time of cap and gown pick up. The student will be required to phonetically spell out their name on this card prior to their arrival to the processional line-up. The staff member will then radio that name to Ms. Marcy Thomas who will be at the microphone and she will then announce the graduate.
- That car will then continue with the Graduation Procession by turning right (East) onto Central Avenue and keep moving away from Orange Preparatory Academy and back to their homes.
- No cars will be allowed to linger in front of OPA, nor will the police allow for any type of congregating in the vicinity of Orange Preparatory Academy. All cars will have to keep moving. There we are not permitting stopping to get out of the vehicles to congregate.
- Students nor family members will be allowed to vacate their car at any time of the processional.
- There will only be one car per graduate allowed to participate in the drive by processional.
- Officers will be on Central Avenue to keep the traffic moving and along the processional route.
- **Parents we are one of the few districts that are trying to do something for our graduates outside of a virtual graduation. We must adhere to the guidelines that have been established in this letter to ensure the safety of our students, families and our staff. Ensure that masks are in all vehicles.**

As always, we thank you for partnering with us in the educating of your child and look forward to celebrating with you.

Sincerely,

Mr. Jason Belton

Mr. Jason Belton,
Principal