

Congratulations to the *Class of 2023* and their families,

Our hope is that all graduating students will have an enjoyable and rewarding finish to their tenure as students at Poinciana High School. I ask that you carefully review the following information to ensure a smooth finish to the year. I am writing to provide you with specific information regarding the end of the school year, graduation practices, and graduation. Hopefully, this information will answer many of your questions. If not, please contact Mr. Thompson via email james.thompson@osceolaschools.net.

END OF SCHOOL: The last day of student attendance for graduating seniors will be Wednesday – May 17, 2023. Prior to leaving school that day, seniors must have all outstanding obligations cleared and all school materials must be returned, as well as all financial obligations must have been met. We are asking all seniors to wear all white on this day for a special event at the end of the day.

GRADUATION REHEARSAL: Rehearsals for this year's graduation will be held on Friday, May 19, 2023 and Monday, May 22, 2023 from 8am until 11am in the Poinciana High School Gymnasium. The students must provide their own transportation on these days as bus transportation will not be an option. All students **MUST ATTEND THESE REHEARSALS** in order to participate in the graduation ceremony- please make sure that you have requested this time off with employers and all other institutions that you may need to clear this time with. All speakers will practice their speeches following this rehearsal with Mr. Thompson. A copy of each speech must be given to Mr. Thompson at that time for approval. Students should bring water with them, as we will be outside for parts of this rehearsal.

SENIOR WALK- the annual senior walk will take place at the end of the scheduled rehearsal on Monday, May 22, 2023. The students will wear their cap and gown and walk from Poinciana High School to Reedy Creek Elementary school. This is an amazing event for both our seniors and the younger students at Reedy Creek as we acknowledge the accomplishments of our graduates in a celebratory parade.

GRADUATION CEREMONY: The Graduation Ceremony will be held at the Osceola Heritage Park- Silver Spurs Arena at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday - May 23, 2023. **Everyone will need tickets to attend the ceremony. Each student will be provided only 10 tickets to ceremony.** These tickets will be handed out to the students following the rehearsals all outstanding obligations must be cleared prior to receiving the tickets. All Seniors are expected to arrive at the Silver Spurs arena no later than 12:00 pm. They will enter the building via the EAST entrance (which will be marked by signage). The students will go through a metal detector and at the request of Superintendent Dr. Debra Pace, all cell phones (not left in cars or with parents) will be collected and held until following the ceremony by a member of the Poinciana High School faculty. If your cell phone is collected, it may be picked up in front of the arena. If they are not picked up 20 minutes following the ceremony, it may be picked up at Poinciana High School the following day. Please make arrangements prior to the ceremony. We at Poinciana High School suggest that the students leave their phones with a family member or in their car securely locked up.

The Silver Spurs Arena doors will be opened to the public 1 hour before the event on Tuesday - May 23, 2023. Spectators should enter through the main entrance—lower lobby. Parents and guests are not permitted on the main floor before and during the commencement exercise. Remember that we have scheduled professional photographers to take pictures. The purchase of pictures is optional. This service is being made available so that parents do not have to leave their seats to take pictures of this event. Seating for the disabled will be available. Enter through the main lobby and proceed directly to the nearest usher who will provide accommodations. Only one person will be allowed to accompany the guest with a disability. The ceremony will begin promptly at 1:30 p.m. and should last approximately 1 hour and 30minutes. After the ceremony, plan on meeting your graduate in the parking lot directly in front of the arena. The recessional will take the graduates immediately out of the building into the parking lot. Make specific arrangements to meet at a location away from the exit door to permit graduates and families to quickly disperse from the arena and area. As this is a formal affair, there will be NO GUM allowed. All students will be asked to dispose of their gum upon entering the arena.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE: There should be no flowers on the gown. There should be no cell phones, bags, or purses carried into the arena for graduation- leave these in your car or in the care of a family member. The required dress for the event is as follows: Males should wear dress slacks, shirt with collar, dress shoes and females should wear a dress, blouse and skirt or dress pants with dress shoes. Female students are asked NOT to wear high heel shoes- either flats, sandals, or wedges Please wear all necklaces and chains on the inside of your gown. If your chains are visible outside the gown, you will be asked to either take it off or adjust it to the inside of the gown.

Cap and Gown are REQUIRED. Please iron your gown on low heat. If you have not yet purchased your cap and gown- you must go to the Herff Jones website at www.herfforlando.com to place that order as soon as possible. All students must purchase a new cap and gown unit. **NO STUDENTS MAY USE A PREVIOUSLY PURCHASED CAP AND GOWN.**

The students are allowed to wear any stole, cord, or medal that issued to them by Poinciana High School only. All others will be confiscated at the door and returned to the student following the ceremony. The students are allowed to decorate their caps for graduation this year- however, they must abide by the guidelines provided here:

- 1. All decorations must be flat to cap; you may not have anything sticking up in a 3-D manner.**
- 2. NO LIGHTS or MOVING PARTS**
- 3. Must be school appropriate (no profane or foul language, images, or symbols)**
- 4. MUST BE APPROVED BY MR. SCHWARTZ prior to May 17, 2023.**

You may wish to have a paper drawing of your design to be approved prior to putting it on your cap, as you will be required to purchase a new cap at (\$20) if it is not approved or appropriate.

WE ARE ASKING FOR YOUR HELP: We hope that we can maintain a dignity around this important ceremony. Blown up beach balls, bounced balls, squirted "silly string", bull horns are not appropriate. Graduation parties are more appropriate for "celebrations of this nature." Please discuss this issue with your graduate. We want to do everything possible to make this activity a cherished memory for ALL of our students. A good rule of thumb, if the action takes attention away from the ceremony and focuses on an individual or group of individuals, then it is inappropriate and unacceptable. Security will remove any individuals behaving inappropriately.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,

James L. Thompson
Mr. James L. Thompson
Graduation Coordinator
Senior Class Sponsor