

BLYTHEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2017 GRADUATION INFORMATION



March 8th, 2017

Dear Class of 2017,

Graduation is a time-honored tradition that celebrates your success of completing high school. I would like to take this time to congratulate each of you for reaching this point in your lives. For some of you, this will be the first graduation of many as you begin your life as a college student. For others, this will be the last time you will call yourself a student before you go into the workplace or military. And whether you are the first person to graduate in your family, or whether you are just simply the next in a long line of graduates, please know that I am proud of each of you as you embark on your own life's journey.

The graduation ceremony is an exciting time for all of us to prepare to make that step toward the next stage of your life. We want your graduation to be one that is special for all of you and your families. With that in mind, I am asking that you remember a couple of key points. First, every member of the Class of 2017 has worked extremely hard to get to this day and each of you deserve not only to have your name called at graduation, but also heard by all who are in attendance. As you prepare your family and friends, please ask that they *honor every member of your graduation class by holding their applause* and cheers until every member of your class has crossed the stage. At that time, we will congratulate and applaud you together. Second, please make sure that you honor yourself by *acting appropriately between now and graduation and during the ceremony* itself. Each of you has responsibility for your own actions and I ask that you remember that, as the Class of 2017, you will be setting the bar high for the classes to follow.

Class of 2017, your teachers, your school, and your families are all proud of you. On behalf of the faculty and staff of Blythewood High School, I want you to know that it has been our privilege to work with you as a member of the Bengal Family. I hope you will take time to savor the last few months of high school and we look forward to seeing what great things each of you will accomplish in your lives.

Congratulations Class of 2017!

Sincerely,

Fletcher Spigner Director of Student Activities

BLYTHEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2017 IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

(SUBJECT TO CHANGE!)

- April 7 Jostens Graduation Supplies Pick-up in 401. You will be given an appointment time and you must have your balance paid in full to pick up items!
- April 9-13 SPRING BREAK!
- May 6 Prom at Carolina Alumni Center; 8:00pm
- May 3 MANDATORY Senior Class Graduation Meeting during PAWS in auditorium
 May 5 Last day to clear all debts, hours, Chromebook, and attendance issues.
 Last day to sign up for Class Soloist and Class Speaker
 Last day to report all scholarships to Mrs. Mudger in 401
- May 15 Students with Last Names A-F may pick up your Golden Ticket in Student Activities (401) during lunch ONLY! You will NOT be issued your ticket if you have not paid your fees, cleared your discipline/attendance, and/or are in danger of failing a course required for graduation!
- May 16 Students with <u>Last Names G-L</u> may pick up your Golden Ticket in Student Activities (401) during lunch ONLY! <u>You will NOT be issued your ticket if you have not paid your</u> fees, cleared your discipline/attendance, and/or are in danger of failing a course required for graduation!
- May 17 Students with Last Names M-R may pick up your Golden Ticket in Student Activities (401) during lunch ONLY! You will NOT be issued your ticket if you have not paid your fees, cleared your discipline/attendance, and/or are in danger of failing a course required for graduation!
- May 18 Students with Last Names S-Z may pick up your Golden Ticket in Student Activities (401) during lunch ONLY! You will NOT be issued your ticket if you have not paid your fees, cleared your discipline/attendance, and/or are in danger of failing a course required for graduation!
- May 19 SENIOR ASSEMBLY! All seniors are <u>required</u> to be present if they wish to participate in graduation. Please report to the big gym **no later than 8:35am!** LAST DAY to turn in your Chromebook LAST full day of school for Seniors
- June 3 8:00 a.m. Graduation at Colonial Life Arena Seniors should arrive NO LATER THAN 7:15 am You will get your diploma cover when you walk across the stage. **DO NOT BE LATE! WE WILL START WITHOUT YOU!**

GOLDEN TICKET INFORMATION

- The Golden Ticket is your ticket into the arena and your certification that you can graduate. You must meet all requirements in this packet AND bring your Golden Ticket with you to the Arena on June 3rd. Do not lose your Golden Ticket and do not forget to bring it with you to Graduation!
- **2.** In order to be issued your Golden Ticket, you must have cleared/met all of the following:
 - **a.** Projected to graduate based on your grades AND attendance.
 - **b.** Paid all fees and debts (including Chromebook damages).
 - **c.** Served all hours and cleared all discipline.

Failure to comply with any of the above items will result in a hold being placed on your Golden Ticket. You <u>WILL NOT</u> receive your Golden Ticket until all of the above items have been taken care of!

- **3.** You must present your Golden Ticket at the door of the Elephant Room at the Colonial Life Arena. **No Golden Ticket = No Graduation. No kidding.** Don't leave it at home or in the car...
- **4.** You will pick up your Golden Ticket **May 15th-18th at lunch** in 401 based on your last name. Please refer to the schedule and requirements in this packet.
- **5.** If a senior is in danger of failing a class required for graduation, the Golden Ticket **WILL NOT** be given to the student until the class has been passed.
- **6.** Having a Golden Ticket does NOT imply that a student will actually graduate, receive a diploma, and/or participate in the ceremony. Only students who have met all requirements for graduation will be allowed to participate in the ceremony and ultimate receive their diploma.

2017 GRADUATION CEREMONY INFORMATION

Please carefully read and understand the following information/procedures for the Graduation Ceremony.

- 1. The Graduation Ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, June 3rd at 8:00 a.m. at the Colonial Life Arena. Doors open *for guests* at 7:30 a.m. Your guests are not allowed to save seats. YOU must bring and present your Golden Ticket at the Elephant Room door.
- **2.** Only diploma covers will be presented during the ceremony. Students who disregard the guidelines for appropriate behavior before, during and/or after the ceremony run the risk of not receiving their actual diploma in the mail. Examples of inappropriate behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - **a.** Calling out or cheering
 - **b.** Altering your, gown, stole, or tassel
 - c. Throwing caps in the air
 - **d.** Loud, inappropriate noises
 - e. Waving to the crowd as you cross the stage
 - **f.** Dancing across the stage
 - **g.** Cell phones ringing
- **3.** Guests/graduates who are loud and/or disruptive during the ceremony will be escorted out by the Richland County Sheriff's Department. You do not want to run the risk of not receiving your diploma because of the behavior of someone YOU invited. Please remind your guests of appropriate behavior at graduation. Everyone has worked hard to earn this privilege and deserves to hear his/her name called at the ceremony.
- 4. Balloons, signs, flowers, food, drinks, and noisemakers are NOT allowed in the arena during graduation.
- **5.** Handicapped seating is available on the first concourse and there are limited seats available for family members of anyone who is handicapped. The handicapped entrance to arena is the entrance closest to the intersection of College and Lincoln Streets. Arena personnel can assist with handicapped seating.
- **6.** Graduates should NOT bring or carry purses or cell phones with them during the ceremony. There is nowhere to store them.
- **7.** If you arrive at the arena and your cap, gown, tassel, and stole do not match the others, or if your attire has been altered in any unapproved way, you will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony. Please see the guidelines for decorating your cap on the next page!
- **8.** Hang your gown prior to graduation to eliminate any wrinkles. If you press the gown, please be sure to use a **cool iron** to avoid damaging the gown. DO NOT WASH IT! We do not have replacement gowns!
- **9.** Students may only wear honor cords that are issued by Blythewood High School. No cords or tassels that have been given to you by an outside organization may be worn during graduation!
- **10.** Ladies are expected to wear dresses/pants suits and dress shoes. Dresses should not be longer than the gown.
- **11.** Gentlemen are expected to wear collared dress shirts, ties, slacks, dress shoes, and socks. Bow ties are fine.
- **12.** STUDENTS WHO ARRIVE AT THE ARENA DRESSED INAPPROPRIATELY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CEREMONY. This includes jewelry, accessories, and hairstyle. Students who engage in inappropriate behavior during the ceremony will be escorted out of the arena immediately. In addition, diplomas will be held until the matter is resolved to the satisfaction of the administration.
- **13.** It is the responsibility of the graduating senior to remain current with all information concerning the graduation ceremony.

2017 CAP DECORATING GUIDELINES

Please take into consideration the following rules and guidelines when decorating your 2017 graduation cap. This should be a positive experience for you and your family. We want to celebrate your achievements at Blythewood as well as what you will be doing after high school. We encourage you to be creative, unique, respectful, and positive as you decorate your cap. Failure to follow these rules will result in a replacement cap being given to you during commencement at your own cost (\$25)!

Administration reserves the right to disallow any cap design for any reason prior to, just before, or during the graduation ceremony. All decisions made by administration are final.

Positive cap decorating ideas include, but are not limited to:

- Thanking a parent, grandparent, teacher, guardian
- Recognizing the branch of the military you will be joining
- Recognizing the college/university you will be attending
- Recognizing a club, class, sport, or other organization you are involved in
- Positive quotes/images
- Positive Blythewood-themed images/quotes
- Original artwork

General Cap Decorating Guidelines

- All decorations must be neat and organized. You may NOT simply write on top of your cap. It must be truly *decorated.*
- No offensive language, sayings, nicknames, pictures or lyrics on cap
- No objects such as signs, stuffed animals, bells, flowers, or any 3D object may rest on the cap. This includes lights.
- ALL decorations MUST lay FLAT on the cap. Nothing can lay perpendicular thus allowing us to see the decoration beyond eye level. Your cap must not block anyone's view.
- Your cap CANNOT make noise. No bells, horns, or anything that makes noise.
- No symbols, logos, words, sayings or any action that can be deemed as offensive to those in any culture. Remember, this is not just your ceremony but a ceremony you share with all of your classmates and their respective friends and family members!
- No symbols, logos, words, sayings, or actions that affiliate themselves with criminals, alcohol or drug paraphernalia, or any other illegal activity.
- No sexual or inappropriate references or innuendos.
- You may decorate the entire top of the mortarboard, but underneath and the headpiece should remain untouched and unaltered.
- The tassel must still be present on the cap. You may not alter your tassel in any way.

If you have any questions about any intended information/images that you feel might be questionable, be sure to talk to an administrator during school hours long before graduation. If you think your idea might be inappropriate, it probably is!

We highly suggest you trace your cap onto cardboard and decorate the cardboard so that, if you make a mistake, you can start over with a new piece of cardboard. Please be sure to include a small hole for the tassel. After you decorate it, stick it to your cap with double-sided tape or Velcro tape. **We will not furnish new caps if you mess yours up decorating.** Please be sure before you decorate!

All caps will be reviewed prior to the graduation ceremony. BHS and/or Richland Two Administration reserves the right to disallow anything that is not considered appropriate for the commencement ceremony for any reason. In order to encourage high standards of student conduct and behavior, administration will replace a student's cap if it is in violation of the guidelines. If this is the case, the student will be charged \$25 for the replacement cap.

Administration reserves the right to disallow any cap design for any reason prior to, just before, or during the graduation ceremony. All decisions made by administration are final.

GRADUATION PARKING

- 1. There are multiple major construction projects in the immediate vicinity of the Colonial Life Arena which will close all of the normal parking lots that are normally available for graduation parking. It is very important that parents, families, and graduates plan accordingly. You will be given a detailed map in May. Families and guests will be parking a long distance from the coliseum and riding in shuttles. This will add time to your journey so please arrive in plenty of time to find a parking space, catch the shuttle, enter the arena, and find a seat.
- **2.** Our graduation is the first Richland Two Graduation and it will start at 8:00 a.m. Guest will be allowed to enter the arena at 7:30 a.m. Despite this, traffic and parking around the arena will be a challenge. Graduates and guests should plan ahead, bring money for parking, and be flexible. Please plan accordingly!
- **3.** Give yourself PLENTY of time to get downtown, find a place to park, and get to the Elephant Room. Remember, **you need to be IN the Elephant Room no later than 7:15 a.m. That means you need to be parked by 7:00 a.m. AT THE LATEST in order to catch a shuttle or walk to the Arena.** That means you need to leave Blythewood around 6:15am. Seriously, parking will be TERRIBLE, even on a Saturday!
- **4.** Parking is free if you park in a designated graduation lot (very limited spaces). If you park in a metered space or garage, you will be subject to the parking regulations of the City of Columbia.
- **5.** A detailed map will be provided in May that will include specifics about graduate, parent, and guest parking.
- 6. DO NOT BE LATE and drive carefully!!

2017 GENERAL GRADUATION INFORMATION

Please note the following important information/procedures for graduation:

- **1.** YOU are responsible for taking care of all requirements in this packet. If you fail to do so, you are putting your own graduation at risk.
- 2. All graduating seniors will be issued a Golden Ticket, which clears you to participate in the graduation ceremony. If you have paid all school debts, served all discipline hours, and met all graduation requirements, you may pick up your tickets between <u>May 15th and 18th during lunch in Student Activities</u> (401). You must present your Golden Ticket at the door to the Elephant Room in order to participate in the Graduation Ceremony. No Golden Ticket = No Graduation
- **3.** Senior Debts on file as of *Friday, May 5th* must be cleared in order to receive your Golden Ticket_and participate in the graduation ceremony. *This includes Chromebook damage fees.* Any fee/debt posted after May 5th must be cleared in order to receive your diploma. Diplomas will be held until all debts are cleared.
- **4.** All discipline hours must be served by *Friday, May 5th* in order to receive your Golden Ticket and participate in the ceremony.
- 5. Participants in graduation are required to have purchased a cap, gown, tassel, diploma cover, and stole. <u>You will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony</u> <u>without the proper graduation attire</u>. If you failed to order these items earlier this year, please call Jostens ASAP at 803-485-4503!
- 6. We will have our annual **Senior Assembly** on **Friday, May 19**th that will also serve as graduation rehearsal. Attendance at this event is mandatory for all seniors. If you do not attend the assembly, you will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony. You are required to be in the big gym <u>no later than 8:35am</u>!
- The 2017 Graduation Ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, June 3rd at 8:00 am at the Colonial Life Arena. You MUST bring your cap, gown, tassel, stole, and Golden Ticket in order to participate. Your diploma cover is handed to you as you cross the stage.
- 8. Seniors should plan to arrive at the Elephant Room entrance of the Colonial Life Arena **no later than 7:15 a.m. on Saturday, June 3**rd for graduation. Allow plenty of time for traffic and parking. Our ceremony will occur during weekday rush hour traffic so there will be a lot of people in the downtown area. Plan ahead and don't be late—we WILL start without you! **The doors to the arena will open at 7:30 a.m. for your guests.** Parking and logistical details will be provided in May.

2017 SENIOR CHECKLIST

Have you done the following...

- ✓ Paid all fees/debts in main office including course fees, debts for lost books, uniforms, etc.?
- ✓ Paid all library fines? (pay these in the Library, not the Main Office)
- ✓ Purchased/paid for a cap, gown, tassel, diploma cover, and stole?
- ✓ Cleared up any Chromebook damage issues with the Tech Bar in the Library?
- ✓ Cleared any excessive absences?
- ✓ Served all hours and cleared all discipline issues?

Senior Tips and Advice

- EVERY SENIOR should check in the main office AND Library to confirm that you have no school debt, including Chromebook damage fees.
- EVERY SENIOR should confirm with their administrator that they have no outstanding discipline hours and no attendance issues.
- EVERY SENIOR is required to have their Golden Ticket, cap, gown, tassel, diploma cover, and stole in order to participate in Graduation.
- EVERY SENIOR should report all college acceptances and scholarship offers to Ms. Mudger in 401. Bring in copies of college and scholarship award letters in order to be included in the Graduation Program, even ones you don't plan to use.

Failure to take care of these items will result in the following:

- You will not receive your Golden Ticket.
- You will not participate in the graduation ceremony.
- You will not receive your diploma.

GRADUATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When/where is Graduation?

Graduation is **Saturday, June 3rd at 8:00 a.m.** at the **Colonial Life Arena**. Seniors should arrive at the Elephant Room entrance to the arena *no later than* 7:15 a.m. Doors to the arena will open for guests at 7:30 a.m. Guests should enter via the main arena entrance. Detailed maps and directions will be provided in May.

Why is graduation on a Saturday?

The district office and Colonial Life Arena coordinate graduation times for all high schools in Richland Two and surrounding districts. Many area districts use the Colonial Life Arena and Blythewood has no control over the Graduation date.

How many tickets do I get?

Tickets are <u>not</u> required for your guests to attend graduation! However, YOU are required to bring your **GOLDEN TICKET** to the Elephant Room in order participate in graduation. In order to receive your Golden Ticket, you must meet all requirements and deadlines listed in this packet!

When will I get my Golden Ticket?

As long as you have met all graduation requirements listed in this packet, you may pick up your Golden Ticket between May 15th and 18th at lunch in 401. A schedule based on your last name will be publicized. *You are not allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony without your Golden Ticket.*

Do I really need to have my Golden Ticket to participate in graduation?

YES. No Golden Ticket = No Graduation. No exceptions. Do not forget your Golden Ticket.

Is the senior assembly on May 19th mandatory?

Yes. We will rehearse the graduation ceremony at the senior assembly. **You will NOT be allowed to participate in graduation if you miss the senior assembly.** Put it in your calendar now! In addition, you are required to dress up for the senior assembly AND graduation. You will be given guidelines at our meetings in May.

What cords can I wear to graduation?

You may only wear cords that are issued through Blythewood High School. Non-school cords and regalia are not allowed at Richland Two graduations.

Is this information on the school web site?

Yes. Click on the tab labeled "Class of 2017 Info." We will update this packet throughout the spring. You will get hard copies at our senior meetings and an electronic copy will be updated on the web site.

GRADUATION SPEAKER/SOLOIST

All BHS Seniors are able to apply and tryout for Graduation Speaker and/or Graduation Soloist. In addition, the Valedictorian and Salutatorian also give speeches at the Graduation Ceremony. Please refer to the guidelines below for information on how to apply for these opportunities:

GRADUATION SPEAKER

If you would like to tryout for Graduation Speaker, please follow this procedure:

- **1.** Please obtain the Graduation Speaker form from Student Activities (401) <u>after Spring</u> <u>Break.</u>
- 2. Fill out the form and return it to **Mr. Spigner in 401** no later than Friday, May 5th.
- **3.** See Mr. Spigner with any questions.

GRADUATION SOLOIST

- **1.** Please obtain the Graduation Soloist form from Student Activities (401) after Spring Break.
- 2. Fill out the form and return it to Ms. Claiborne in 901 no later than Friday, May 5th.
- **3.** See Ms. Claiborne with any questions.

SENIOR ASSEMBLY 2017

The Blythewood High School Senior Assembly will be held on Friday, May 19th. This assembly will be held in YOUR honor and we will recognize and celebrate YOUR accomplishments throughout your time at Blythewood High School. We will honor our Seniors of the Year, Senior Superlatives, scholarship recipients, team captains, club presidents, and much more! In addition, the Senior Assembly will serve as the official rehearsal for the Graduation ceremony.

Please read over the following information carefully.

- **1.** Attendance at the Senior Assembly is **mandatory** for all seniors who are participating in the Graduation ceremony. This is assembly will serve as the only rehearsal for Graduation and all seniors are REQUIRED to be present.
- 2. All seniors must be in the Big Gym by <u>8:35am on Friday, May 19th.</u> You will be lined up in alphabetical order similar to the way you will be lined up at Graduation.
- **3.** The Senior Assembly will start at 9:00am.
- **4.** You are expected to dress professionally for the Senior Assembly. This will be a nice event designed to honor your accomplishments and you should dress accordingly in business/church attire that meets the dress code. Gentlemen should wear coats and ties and ladies should wear professional attire to include dresses, skirts, and/or suits.
- **5.** Your parents are welcome to attend. Information will be provided in May.