



AVOCA

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Central School District



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To Seniors, Senior Parents/Guardians, Staff, Families, and Friends:

As you may know, on June 7 Governor Cuomo stated that in-person graduation ceremonies of 150 people or less may begin on June 26. We were grateful that he relented and allowed in person outdoor graduation ceremonies of less than 150 people. Our senior class is 40 students. In order to meet the state requirement and include parents and personnel to help us adhere to safety guidelines and run graduation, we would need one ceremony but would be required to limit each graduate to 2 guests. To date the Governor has not changed this arbitrary number which is not based on fact or data. He has allowed gatherings for other events and activities such as beaches and big box stores at 25% of the location's capacity. We believe we can hold graduation safely using this guideline, but unless and until the governor changes his 150 person limit, we are unable to hold an in-person graduation ceremony without a limitation on the number of guests allowed to attend for this very special Class of 2020.

Please help us advocate for our seniors by calling the governor's office. Urge him to increase the number of attendees at in-person graduation ceremonies using the same percentage limits being used for other gatherings at beaches, big box stores (Walmart, Lowes, Home Depot) and Grocery stores: **25% or more of the actual venue's capacity**. If this reasonable request were granted, almost all districts in the state could hold one graduation ceremony that includes all graduates, two parents/guests, and the necessary staff on their ball fields and meet social distancing requirements.

The phone number for the governor's office is **518-474-8390**. **Please call every day. Call often if you can, and if possible**, please use your social media presence to spread the word, not only in our district but to every district across the state. Due to the volume of calls there may be an extended wait time on calls.

To aid this effort, you might also call state and local media (see suggested numbers below). Urge them to pose the question to the governor to increase the number of attendees at in-person graduation ceremonies using the same 25% of capacity limit being used for gatherings at beaches, big box stores, and grocery stores. Their questioning can raise the issue's profile with the governor and put the spotlight on our graduates and the graduation they all deserve. They truly are New York Tough!!!

- Times Union (518) 454-5694 (main number), (518) 454-5424 (Albany bureau)
- Spectrum News (518) 641-6397 - Capital Region
- WETM News 607-733-5518
- WENY News 607-739-3636
- Big Fox News 607-937-5000

We thank you for your assistance and advocacy for the governor to adjust his control over this important issue.

Respectfully, Stephen C. Saxton, Superintendent