

# **Phillips Exeter Academy**

## **Class of 2024 Commencement Information**

March 2024

Dear Parents of Graduating Seniors:

With spring on the horizon, our thoughts turn toward the upcoming graduation weekend. We hope you can make plans to join us beginning on Saturday, June 1 – the first day of family graduation activities. The graduation ceremony runs from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Sunday, June 2.

**Please visit our Academy website (parents' page) at [www.exeter.edu/parents](http://www.exeter.edu/parents) regularly for the most up-to-date graduation information, including links to the Graduation Week Schedule, Local Accommodations and Directions.**

### **Lodging**

To reserve rooms, parents and guests should make direct inquiries to the various hotels in the Exeter, Portsmouth, and Hampton areas. Please check the [parents' page](#) on our website for a link to some of the various hotels and motels in the area. Off-campus seniors are welcome to return to campus on Thursday, May 30, but not before.

### **When to Arrive**

There are no events scheduled for parents and friends prior to the evening of Friday, May 31. However, most guests arrive either Friday or Saturday. Please note that some local hotels have a minimum night-stay policy. Please note that dormitories close Sunday afternoon and most families are on their way by that evening.

### **Special Events**

The Cum Laude Society will host a ceremony for senior members and their families on Saturday, June 1. New members will receive invitations on Friday evening, May 31.

The Principal's Reception on Saturday afternoon is an opportunity for seniors, families, and guests to mingle with the principal, administrators, faculty, and other families. Saturday evening is generally left free for families and guests to enjoy with their senior. Check-in for seniors on Saturday evening is at 10:30 p.m.

### **Parking on Sunday**

We ask that parents leave their vehicles near their child's dormitory. Campus Safety staff will direct other guests to the parking areas off Chadwick Lane, which is accessible from Court Street (Route 108). If the weather favors an outdoor ceremony, the roadway in front of Peabody Hall and the driveway beside Bissell House will be cleared for emergency use only, while Front Street and Tan Lane will be closed to traffic. Drivers of cars bearing elderly guests

or those with accessibility needs should ask the police officers for permission to use the small lot between the Academy Building and Peabody Hall to let off their passengers, and then should park elsewhere on the street.

If extreme weather requires us to hold the ceremony indoors in the William Boyce Thompson Field House, people may enter the Field House from Court Street via the main door past Love Gym and the Goel Center for Theater and Dance, or from the parking garage beneath Thompson Field House. There is space for 170 cars in the garage, including several designated handicap spaces. Guests with accessibility needs may access Thompson Field House from the parking garage entrance and take the elevator up to the first floor.

### **Graduation Invitations**

The Exeter Bookstore will give each senior five free graduation invitations; one of these invitations will be included in a mailing to seniors' parents in March. After spring break, each senior will receive the other four free invitations in their P.O. Box. If parents and/or seniors would like additional invitations, they will be available for purchase for \$1 each at the Exeter Bookstore or by calling the bookstore at 603-777-3500.

Invitations or tickets are NOT required to attend the graduation ceremony, and there is unlimited seating outdoors on the Academy Lawn based on a first come, first served basis. However, if heavy rain and/or thunderstorms are forecast on the day of graduation we will move the ceremony indoors to Thompson Field House, and the luncheon following the ceremony to Rink A in the Athletics Complex. That decision will be made early on that Sunday morning. Please note that seating in Thompson Field House will be more limited than on the Academy Lawn.

If the weather forecast on June 2 is questionable, please visit the [parents' page](#) beginning at 8:00 a.m. on Graduation morning for updated information on the location of the commencement exercises and luncheon.

### **Dress Code for the Graduation Ceremony**

Surprising to most seniors, there is no formal dress code for the ceremony itself. Students have traditionally worn a jacket and tie, or light-colored dress. Ethnic attire is welcome. In deciding what to wear, it is important, however, to remember that whatever is worn should be appropriate for a ceremony in front of 4,000 family members and guests.

### **Photographs**

To minimize the number of people taking pictures during the ceremony, the school has contracted with an outside still photographer to take a photograph of each senior at the time they receive their diploma from the principal. GradImages (<https://www.gradimages.com>, 800-261-2576) will contact you directly via email to offer their services.

While the school realizes many parents may wish to take their own pictures – still or video – it is our hope that those doing so will be thoughtful of other spectators, stay outside of roped-off areas, and be as inconspicuous as possible.

### **Live Streaming of Graduation Ceremony**

There will be a live stream of the graduation ceremony for friends and family members who are unable to attend in person. A link to the live stream will be posted on the [parents' page](#) on our website closer to graduation.

### **After the Ceremony**

The graduation ceremony will end at approximately noon. There will be a lunch reception on the lawn in front of the Class of 1945 Library immediately following the ceremony. If the ceremony is held indoors in the Thompson Field House, a grab-and-go lunch will be available in Rink A of the Athletics Complex. All in attendance at the day's events – graduates, families, and friends – are invited.

### **Financial Obligations**

Seniors must pay all Academy obligations prior to graduation in order to receive their diploma. Seniors will receive a special notice in May outlining procedures to be followed in reviewing their status. Diplomas will be withheld until all obligations have been fulfilled.

### **Alcohol and Tobacco**

We look forward to a joyous celebration. However, in keeping with the Academy's alcohol and tobacco policies and state law, we remind you that alcoholic beverages – including champagne – are forbidden on campus both before and after graduation. Also, note that Exeter is a smoke-free campus and as such, we discourage the use of cigars after the ceremony.

### **Post-graduation Parties**

The Academy remains concerned about the existence and nature of post-graduation parties where teenagers consume alcohol. The Academy does not condone underage drinking. We want you to be aware that New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts have laws against the hosting of such parties. While alcohol laws may vary from state to state, most states have become more proactive in trying to control underage drinking by holding adults criminally or civilly liable.

Should you have any questions about graduation, or if we at the Academy can help you in any way, please feel free to be in touch with me at [tmitropoulos@exeter.edu](mailto:tmitropoulos@exeter.edu).

Sincerely,

Timothy N. Mitropoulos  
Commencement Coordinator