



Penn High School

56100 Bittersweet Road,
Mishawaka, IN 46545
(574) 258-9500

April 13, 2026

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Congratulations on helping your senior reach this important milestone—graduation from Penn High School. We share in your pride in your senior's achievement.

The purpose of this letter is twofold: to provide information regarding upcoming senior activities and to request your assistance in ensuring that all graduation events reflect the dignity, solemnity, and significance of the honors earned by the Class of 2026.

Please remember that participation in graduation is a privilege, not a requirement. Students are expected to adhere to the established dress code and behavioral standards. **Appropriate attire under the cap and gown for young men includes a collared dress shirt, slacks, dark-colored socks, and dress shoes. Young women should wear dresses or dress pantsuits with dress shoes or dress sandals. Please note that high heels are worn at the student's own risk, as stairs and extended walking are involved. Sandals (casual), tennis/basketball shoes, work boots, or similar footwear are not permitted.** We respectfully request your support in helping us enforce these expectations.

CAPS and GOWNS

Caps and gowns will be distributed to seniors on **April 28th and 29th** in the Auxiliary Gym during all blocks. If your senior does not pick up his/her cap and gown at that time, they may pick them up at their earliest convenience in the Main Office. Please have your student try on the cap and gown before graduation. If either does not fit, please contact Jostens at **574-216-6336**. All Penn graduation caps and gowns are black.

ELKHART AREA CAREER CENTER

Seniors attending the Elkhart Area Career Center will continue to attend until their final day at the Career Center, **May 29th**, unless they have other obligations that require them to complete specific course requirements. Bus transportation will remain the same.

SENIOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements will be distributed to students on **April 28th and 29th** in the Auxiliary Gym, during all blocks. If your senior does not pick up his/her announcements at that time, please stop by the Main Office; all unclaimed items will be available for pick up.

COMMENCEMENT INFORMATION

Seniors will be given commencement information and directions in meetings on **April 28th and 29th**. The meetings will be held at the beginning of every period in the Penn High School Auxiliary Gym. If your student does not have a study hall or dismissal period, they must make arrangements with a teacher to attend **one** of the meetings. Please make every effort to have your senior attend to hear this important information.

Full-time Night School and Pennway seniors should plan to attend a meeting at Penn on the previously mentioned dates.

SENIOR RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The Senior Recognition Program will be held on Monday, **May 11, 2026**, at 6:30 p.m. in the Penn High School EOS-Tania Bengtsson Center for Performing Arts (CPA) by invitation only. Seniors who will be receiving awards will be notified by mail that they will be recognized and should report to the **Cafeteria** by 5:45 p.m. on **May 11th** (through Door A & D) for seating and final instructions. **Seniors are to wear their gowns (no caps), any stoles, cords, or medals received by the Main Office, and appropriate attire to the Recognition Program. Appropriate attire under the gown will be a dress shirt, slacks, dark-colored socks, and dress shoes for young men. Dresses or dress pants are appropriate for young women. Dress shoes or dress sandals for young women will be expected. Casual sandals, tennis/basketball shoes, work boots, or similar footwear will not be allowed.**

SENIOR FINAL EXAMS

The schedule for senior final exams will be as follows:

Thursday, May 28	Blocks 2 & 4 Gold
Friday, May 29	Blocks 2 & 4 Black
Monday, June 1	Blocks 1 & 3 Gold
Tuesday, June 2	Blocks 1 & 3 Black

SENIORS IN DANGER OF FAILING

Seniors who fail a required course for graduation will be notified by the Counseling Center and will be enrolled in class(es) for summer school.

GRADUATION REHEARSAL

Commencement-related information will be given to seniors when they meet with administrators on **April 28th and April 29th, 2026**. The arrangement of facilities at the University of Notre Dame will allow us the opportunity to practice and go over last-minute details on the day of commencement, just before the formal activities on **June 8, 2026**.

On the day of commencement, Monday, June 8th, the doors for students to enter Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center will be open at 4:30 p.m. Seniors are to enter at Gate 10 and report to the *field house* at the Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center by 4:45 p.m. Seniors arriving after 5 p.m. will not be in alphabetical order and may be required to be seated at the end of the line or may even be excluded from commencement. Seniors are required to wear their caps and gowns and to have appropriate attire under their caps and gowns. Those who do not comply with the standard of dress that is outlined earlier in this letter *will not be allowed to participate*. **Also, no decorations on the caps and gowns will be allowed.**

Seniors are asked to refrain from bringing valuables to commencement. Please bring only those necessary items that you will need at graduation. Sunglasses, cell phones, gifts, hangers, food, or drinks will not be allowed. Girls may bring a *small* handbag/purse. **Penn High School and/or Notre Dame are not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

Parents and guests are to enter through the south main entrance of the Purcell Pavilion between Gates 8 and 10. **Doors open at 5:30 p.m.** Handicapped facilities are available throughout the Joyce Center.

DIPLOMAS

Students may pick up their diplomas beginning Monday, June 29, 2026, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., continuing throughout the remainder of the summer. Pickup will take place in the Main Office, accessible through Door A.

2026 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

Commencement, the most solemn of all graduation activities, will be held on **June 8, 2026**, at 7:00 p.m. at Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. Tickets are not required for the commencement. A map of the Notre Dame campus is available on the Penn High School website at the following link: map.nd.edu. The parking map will be available on the Penn High School website at this link: penn.phmschools.org/commencement-information. **Please note there will be no shuttle service, not even from the Bulla Lot or Innovation Parking Lot.** Seniors, parents, guardians, friends, and relatives are asked to refrain from activities that would detract from the dignity of this most important occasion. Disruptive noise, noisemakers, or inappropriate behavior by your senior or their guests may cause unnecessary embarrassment and detract from the experience of others who wish to enjoy a respectful and dignified ceremony. **Seniors who behave in a disruptive or inappropriate manner will be removed from participation. Individuals who disrupt the ceremony will be escorted from the Purcell Pavilion.**

Parents should make prior arrangements as to where to meet their seniors after the graduation ceremonies have ended. Please do not interrupt the procession as the graduates exit the Joyce Center. The graduates will be released to meet with family and friends after re-entering the field house.

Notre Dame requires **all purses/bags** to be searched before entering the arena. Backpacks, totes, and duffel bags are not allowed. A list of prohibited items includes alcohol, animals (Service dogs are permitted), artificial noisemakers (including whistles), cameras with lenses longer than six (6) inches, cans or glass bottles (including aerosols), drones or unmanned aerial systems (UAS), fireworks or explosives, food or beverage (except **unopened** plastic water bottles), GoPro or selfie sticks, laser or pen pointers, signs, banners, and **balloons**, stadium chairs or seat backs (unless medical reason with documentation), strollers, water vessels of any kind, Use of tobacco products and e-cigarettes, use or possession of marijuana, and other illegal drugs, weapons/firearms, any other items deemed dangerous or inappropriate. **WEAPONS OF ANY KIND ARE PROHIBITED ON CAMPUS.** Food is allowed as a medical necessity with proof.

HEARING IMPAIRED

For family members who are hearing impaired, interpreters will be located on the left side of the arena, located near the choir students. A limited number of reserved seats will also be available in Section 13.

PHOTOS

Inter-State Photography will take individual pictures of **every senior** with their diplomas as they exit the stage. Inter-State Photography photographs will be available for purchase on a password protected website. The website is cpinterstatestudio.shootproof.com/2026PennCommencement. **Password: PHS2026514.** This link will NOT be active until after the ceremony and Inter-State has uploaded the photos and activated the website gallery. When the photos are ready, a notification will be sent to you via ParentSquare to inform you that the link is active. **NO ONE EXCEPT SCHOOL PERSONNEL WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE ARENA FLOOR TO TAKE PICTURES.** P-H-M/Penn staff take some candid photos

before and during the ceremony; they do **not** take a picture of every student. The P-H-M/Penn photo link will be **different** from the Inter-State Photography link shared above and it will also be shared via ParentSquare a few days after Commencement.

LIVE STREAM

A livestream of the ceremony will be accessible at this link:
penn.phmschools.org/2026-commencement-live-stream

SENIOR PARADE and BREAKFAST

On June 3rd and 4th, seniors will be visiting their former elementary schools and inspiring our elementary students to celebrate graduation and to thank their teachers who have helped them achieve this goal. A light breakfast will be served beginning at 8:45 a.m. in the CPA Lobby before the parades start. More information will be shared at the Senior Meeting on April 28th & 29th.

SENIOR SUNRISE BREAKFAST

Mark your calendars for May 22 at 6:00 a.m.! Kingsmen Court will be sponsoring a Senior Sunrise Breakfast on the football field near the concession stand. Coffee and donuts will be provided, and fun activities are planned. The event will run from 6:00 to 8:00 a.m.

PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES

You and your senior should be aware that participation in any or all of the activities described in this letter is **voluntary**. You have the right to choose **not** to participate.

It is our strong desire that this year's commencement activities reflect the pride and distinction with which we hope the **Class of 2026** will be remembered. Students who choose to violate school rules not only jeopardize their academic success but also risk disciplinary action. Any student subject to disciplinary consequences **may have their diploma withheld** until those consequences have been fully satisfied. We appreciate your support in encouraging your senior to demonstrate responsible academic and behavioral conduct through commencement and the remainder of the school year. Your cooperation in helping your student adhere to the expectations outlined in this letter is both needed and appreciated. If you have any questions regarding commencement activities, please contact my administrative secretary, Brenda Chaffee, who oversees all commencement planning. Mrs. Chaffee can be reached at bchaffee@phm.k12.in.us.

Once again, congratulations to you and your senior. We extend our very best wishes to the newest members of the Penn High School Alumni.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Rachel Fry
Principal