



**William K. Rawson '71; P'08**  
Principal

May 19, 2020

Dear Families and Seniors,

I'm so excited to share in the accomplishment of graduation with all of you! How the circumstances force us to celebrate it this June do not diminish the hard work in getting here. I'm proud of each and every one of the members of the class of 2020. Today, I write to share with you some details about our commencement celebrations planned for June 7, and to make a request for your help.

As we have imagined and shaped the ceremony and graduation experience, we have appreciated the input we received from seniors via the survey, and the photos that you have shared with us. Thank you for responding to that call. (If you have yet to send them to us, it is not too late, please contact Ms. Lassey.) The commencement committee has also met regularly with the senior class representatives, Audrey Vanderslice, David Kim, and Leah Cohen, who have offered ideas and leadership. We are excited to share with you the results of all of the creative planning and coordination in a few short weeks.

**The graduation ceremony will begin online at 10:00 a.m., Eastern Time on Sunday, June 7.** We recognize that while this may not be ideal for all time zones, it seems to accommodate most of our families. We will also make the ceremony available for viewing at a later time for those who cannot participate at the designated time. We will provide you with a link to the graduation website the week before the ceremony.

To that end, we have a request. We understand that graduation is a family event, and that the presence of family and friends is an important component of that celebration. **In order for us to recreate that presence, we are asking that you send us a photo of family, friends, guardians, or anyone who will or would want to share in this occasion and celebrate with you.** Our hope is to form a visual collage of the important people who are joining this celebration to support our seniors. **If you would like to share a photo, please upload it using this [link](#).**

As we get closer to graduation, we'd also like to share with you some other events that will take place on **Saturday, June 6th**.

1. At **10:00 a.m. (ET)**, the Cum Laude Society will hold a virtual induction ceremony. Invitations to inductees will be sent on Friday, before the event. Families of inductees are welcome to attend this event.
2. At **11:00 a.m. (ET)**, students and faculty will gather on Zoom for the Faculty Send-Off of the Class of 2020, in lieu of the Faculty Dinner. Reverend Heidi Heath, selected by the senior class, will be the speaker.

Throughout senior week, I will hold office hours, and hope that you will take the opportunity to drop in to say hello, and allow me to share my congratulations directly. We will also find times for you to have similar opportunities to drop in to speak with other faculty and with each other during senior week, and at a designated time following the commencement ceremony. We will share details in the coming weeks.

As I've said previously, we miss our students tremendously and are committed to honoring our seniors as they complete their Exeter education and earn their diplomas. When I spoke in Assembly on May 6th and said "Exeter lives within each of us and forms around us, no matter the distance between us," I had our incredible seniors in mind, anticipating that although we bid you farewell, we know that you will not be leaving Exeter entirely.

We remain committed to and are planning an opportunity to celebrate your graduation from Exeter in person when it is safe to do so. When we have more details, including a projected date, we will share that with you. Until then, we hope you will all reflect on this moment with joy, pride, and connection. We will be mailing your diplomas a week or so after graduation. Between now and then, though, please keep an eye out for a mailing that should arrive before graduation. Within that box, you will find a few surprises for you to enjoy with your family. Within one of those mailers, you will find a **wrapped white box that you should not open until the day of graduation.**

In the same mailing, you will find a few graduation announcements that we already had printed before the pandemic. Unfortunately, we were unable to arrange for you to purchase additional announcements by mail through the bookstore but thought you might want these few to keep or share.

I look forward to sharing these important moments with you. Thanks to all of you for contributing to this event - the planning committee, senior class representatives, and all of you for your ideas and perseverance (and photos).

Principal Rawson