



**Phillips Exeter Academy
Commencement Information
Class of 2020**

March 2020

Dear Parents of Graduating Seniors:

With spring on the horizon, our thoughts turn toward the upcoming Academy Commencement. We hope you can make plans to join us beginning on Saturday, June 6 — the first day of family graduation activities. The graduation ceremony runs from 10:30 a.m.-noon on Sunday, June 7. Rain or shine, there is unlimited seating for family and friends of the graduating class.

Please visit our Academy website (parents' page) at www.exeter.edu/parents for additional graduation information, including links to the Graduation Week Schedule, Local Accommodations and Directions.

Housing: To reserve rooms, parents and adult guests should make direct inquiries to the various hotels in the Exeter, Portsmouth and Hampton area. Please check the [parents' page](#) on our website for a link to various hotels and motels in the area. Younger siblings and high school-aged friends may sometimes be housed in dormitories by arrangement with your child's adviser. Off-campus seniors are welcome to return to campus on Thursday, June 4, but not before.

When to Arrive: There are no events scheduled for parents and friends before Saturday, June 6. However, most parents, friends and families arrive either Friday or Saturday. Please note that some local hotels have a minimum night-stay policy, an issue over which the school has no control. However, Friday/Saturday night is better than Saturday/Sunday as the dormitories close Sunday afternoon, and most families are on their way by Sunday evening.

Special Events: The Cum Laude Society will host a ceremony for senior members and their families on Saturday, June 6. New members will receive invitations on Friday evening, June 5.

Saturday evening: The period of time after the Principal's Reception Saturday evening is generally left free for families and friends or guests to spend with their graduating senior. Please note that if you're planning to go out to dinner in town or in the area, advanced reservations may be necessary and desirable. Check-in on Saturday evening is at 10:30 p.m.

Parking on Sunday: Parents are asked to leave their vehicles near their son or daughter's dormitory. Other guests will be directed by the Campus Safety staff to the parking areas off Chadwick Lane adjacent to the boiler plant. Chadwick Lane 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 will be closed to traffic. Drivers of cars bearing elderly or handicapped guests should ask the police officers for permission to use the Peabody roadway to let off their passengers, and then should park elsewhere on the street. If the ceremony is held indoors in the George H. Love Gym, people can enter the gym from one of three access points: the main gym door, the glass tower door by the William Boyce Thompson Field House, or from the parking garage underneath the field house (there is space for 170 cars in the garage underneath the field house). Elderly or handicapped guests should be driven to Marston Street on the west side of the new gym where they can access the graduation ceremonies from that side street.

Invitations or tickets are NOT required to attend the graduation ceremony, and there is unlimited seating based on a first come, first serve basis: Please note that there is ample seating, inside or out, and thus there is no limit on the number of guests a senior may invite to the graduation ceremony.

The Exeter Bookstore will give each senior five free graduation invitations; one of those invitations will be mailed to parents in March. After spring break, the other four free invitations will be placed in each senior's P.O. Box. If parents and/or seniors want additional invitations, they may be purchased for \$1 each at the Exeter Bookstore or by calling the bookstore at 603-777-3500.

Dress Code for the Graduation Ceremony: Surprising to most seniors, there is no formal dress code for the ceremony itself, although good taste and common sense should prevail. 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 he or she receives the diploma from the principal. Commencement Photos, Inc., 1348 Main Street, Tewksbury, Massachusetts 01876, 978-851-5924, will contact you shortly to offer you its services. While the school realizes that many parents may wish to take their own pictures — still or video — it is the Commencement Committee's hope that those doing so will be thoughtful of other spectators and work as inconspicuously as possible.

After the Ceremony (approximately noon): The graduation ceremony will end at approximately noon. Immediately following the ceremony, a buffet lunch will be served in front of the Academy Library. If the ceremony is held indoors in the George H. Love Gym, the buffet lunch will be served in Rinks A and B. All in attendance at the day's events — graduates, families and friends — are invited. Although some families choose to make reservations for a lunch in the Exeter area and/or leave when the ceremony is over, the majority of families remain for this last meal together — a festive send-off for the graduates, and their family and friends. Either option is, of course, completely at the discretion of each family. You may wish to make travel plans that include an extra hour or two if you choose to attend the buffet lunch.

Financial Obligations: Seniors must pay all Academy and town 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 for students 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 more and more states are passing legislation against the hosting of such parties. In New Hampshire, a property owner, or one in control of property, who hosts a gathering of five or more unrelated people under the age of 21, knowing that these persons possess or intend to consume alcohol, may be charged with a misdemeanor, punishable by fine or up to one year in jail. While alcohol laws may vary from state to state, the Academy encourages you to check the laws of your state, for other states may also 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 603-777-3499 or pvorkink@exeter.edu.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Peter Vorkink II
Commencement Committee