



Dear Parents and Guardians:

April 18, 2024

The 2024 Graduation Ceremonies are drawing near, and I would like to share with you my congratulations as well as some general information. Graduation dates and times are:

Saturday, May 18th, 2024

9:00 a.m.

Central High School

11:30 a.m.

Glendale High School

2:00 p.m.

Hillcrest High School

4:30 p.m.

Parkview High School

7:00 p.m.

Kickapoo High School

GSB Arena on the MSU campus, located at 685 S. John Q. Hammons Parkway, will be utilized for the Springfield Public Schools' Graduation Ceremonies.

Arena floor seating will be provided for the graduates. Sections E, F, G, H, I, and J will be blocked off from audience seating (see attached map). The box seats will not be available to the general public. There is no reserved seating, you may not tape off or mark seats as reserved. Section D will be reserved for deaf guests. Handicap seating is located on the north and south sides of GSB Arena and can be accessed by the north or south elevators on each side of the building. One additional family member will be allowed to remain with the individual who requires assistance.

Family members and guests must enter the main entrance to GSB Arena which is located on the Southeast side of the building. The doors to GSB Arena will open approximately 45 minutes prior to each graduation ceremony. With respect to the ceremony, the doors will close after each ceremony begins and remain closed until the ceremony has concluded. Guests arriving for the later ceremonies will be allowed entry into GSB Arena after the facility has been cleared of guests from the previous ceremony. Please use the parking lots north of Grand Street and South of Monroe for parking. There will also be parking available to the North of Hammons Student Center in the North Parking Garage off of Cherry and to the Northwest corner of the building off of Holland and Harrison.

Graduates must enter the main entrance to Hammons Student Center which is located on the East side of the building between Hammons Student Center and GSB Arena. Graduates can use the sidewalk between Hammons Student Center and GSB Arena to enter Hammons Student Center. **After the ceremony, graduates will exit from the floor level to the Northeast corner of GSB Arena on Harrison Street.** Graduates will not be allowed to re-enter the building. Audience members should plan to join their graduates by exiting the Northeast, Northwest, or Southwest doors of GSB Arena and walking to the Northeast side of the building on Harrison Street.

For safety/security reasons:

- No caps or gowns are to be worn to the ceremony. Graduates will put their caps and gowns on once they are in Hammons Student Center.
- Graduates will not be allowed to carry anything (i.e. purses, cell phones, etc...) into the graduation ceremony. Their persons will be searched by School Police Officers and all items will be returned after their graduation ceremony is over.
- No flowers, balloons, and/or gifts will be allowed in the building (all gift exchanges need to be handled outside).
- With the exception of medical bags, **bags and purses are not permitted inside GSB Arena.**
- Any person who brings noisemakers or items to disrupt the ceremony (air horns, balls, etc...), will be escorted from the building.

Tornado/Severe Weather GSB Arena:

If inclement weather conditions are in the region, GSB Arena staff will be continually monitoring the surrounding counties in preparation for a tornado watch or warning. The event staff will take the lead (at the direction of GSB Arena Management) in directing patrons to approved tornado locations.

General Tornado/Severe Weather Rules GSB: Arena (see attached map)

The Graduation Ceremony will be stopped once a tornado warning is established. A public announcement will be made by GSB Arena management as necessary. Individuals on the floor will go to locker rooms or backstage hallways. Individuals on the concourse will go back to seating sections in order to be away from the lobby and doors. Removing individuals from the lobby and doorways is the first priority. Patrons in the lower bowl should stay in the lower bowl and move as close to the center of the arena as the crowd will allow. Patrons in the upper bowl should stay in the upper bowl and move as low as possible in the upper bowl and as close to the center of the arena as the crowd allows. A message will be played overhead to help direct patrons to the correct locations.

In the case of extreme rain and/or lightning, graduates will be taken through the tunnel over to Hammons Student Center where families can meet up with their graduate. Patrons can exit through the back exits and make the short walk across the alley to Hammons Student Center to wait for a break in the storm.

SPS Graduation Photography Information:

Live streaming will be provided during each graduation ceremony to ensure that family and friends who are unable to attend in person are able to participate virtually. A DVD of the ceremony as well as the digital download of the ceremony will be available for purchase. Information concerning the purchase of the DVD or digital download will be available at GSB Arena on graduation night.

Wagner Portrait Group will be photographing professional portraits of each graduate as well as throughout the ceremony. Each senior will be photographed individually, as well as when they receive their diploma.

Images will be online for viewing & ordering 2-3 days after graduation. You should receive a digital proof via email & text, however, you can also access it by going to www.WagnerPortraitGroup.com, click 'order' & 'view graduations' button. If you need assistance ordering, please contact Wagner online or by calling 1-800-444-7986.

We want to help you ensure a once-in-a-lifetime ceremony for your graduate and we appreciate your assistance.

Congratulations to you and your graduate,

Sheila Wynn, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Secondary Learning