

# **GRADUATION FOR THE CLASS OF 2026 is scheduled for THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026 at 7:00pm**

**Revised info highlighted in yellow on website - [tkhs.tkschools.org](https://tkhs.tkschools.org)**

## **Senior Class Co-Advisor:**

Mr. George Dudik / email [gdudik@tkschools.org](mailto:gdudik@tkschools.org)

## **Senior Class Co-Advisor:**

Mr. Kevin Kane / email [kkane@tkschools.org](mailto:kkane@tkschools.org)

## **GRADUATION ANNOUNCEMENTS/CAP & GOWN:**

Seniors will have a class meeting on October 17 to go over cap & gown information and announcements, orders will be due by October 23, 2025. Jostens will be at conferences (4-8 p.m.) on the 23rd to collect orders and to answer any questions. ***Please note – Announcements will not be delivered to the seniors until sometime in March. Any apparel that is ordered will be delivered to your home. Caps and gowns will be delivered directly to the school.*** Caps and gowns will be distributed on Tuesday, April 21 in the athletic lobby, before cap/gown photos. If there is a problem with your cap or gown, contact Ms. Wert in the main office.

## **DIPLOMA INFORMATION:**

Diplomas will be ordered by the name that is printed on your birth certificate. If you do not have a copy of your birth certificate on file then a verification form must be completed to confirm the correct, legal spelling of your name.

## **SENIOR PICTURES - YEARBOOK:**

Please submit a senior picture to be published in the yearbook. This picture should be vertical (up and down) and can be either black and white or color. The deadline to submit your senior picture will be December 1, 2024. Photos can be emailed to [yearbook@tkschools.org](mailto:yearbook@tkschools.org), which is preferred, or given to Mr. Kane in room 503.

## **INDIVIDUAL CAP & GOWN PICTURES:**

Geskus will be here on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, to take individual cap and gown photos of all the 2026 seniors. Students will be called down alphabetically, beginning around 8:00 am, to get their individual picture taken in a TK cap, gown, tassel, and diploma cover. NOTE: WE WILL BE DISTRIBUTING CAP/GOWN ORDERS, CORDS, STOLES AT THIS TIME! Geskus will then assemble all the individual pictures into a group composite photo. You do not need to bring payment at this time. Each student will receive viewing and ordering information after their photo is taken. If you did not order a cap or gown, for any reason, we will have a variety of gown sizes available for you to use for the photo. \*\*KCTC 1st session seniors will return at around 9:40 am and will be directed immediately to the athletic lobby for their photo. \*\*TKVS seniors - Your time slot will be 8-10 am.

**NIGHT WITH THE STARS** is scheduled for Friday, May 1, 2026, at 6:00 pm in the Auditorium. Participation is voluntary for students and parents; admission will be collected at the door. The senior vs. junior Powder Puff game will begin at 8:00 PM on the football field.

**FULFILLING OBLIGATIONS!** All obligations (books, fees, library fines, etc.) must be fulfilled in order to walk at graduation. Lockers must be emptied and cleaned out thoroughly. All book and library fines must be paid. All athletic uniforms and equipment must be returned to the athletic office, and pay-to-play fees settled. You will be sent a fee statement if your student has any outstanding fees. We will also be handing out fee reports personally to seniors. You can see your fee balances at any time by logging into your *PowerSchool* account.

Students who accumulate more than ten (10) absences in a semester will be placed on social probation and may not attend school functions, which include participating in the senior commencement ceremony. Please refer to the [TKHS 25-26 Attendance Policy](#).

## **GRADUATING WITH HONORS:**

Seniors in the top ten will receive an orange stole to wear. Seniors with a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.98 or higher will receive a gold cord - **Highest Honors**, seniors with a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.7 to 3.97 will receive a silver cord - **High Honors**, and seniors with a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.5 to 3.69 will receive a bronze cord - **Honors**.

**\*Reminder, the above GPAs are determined at the end of the first semester of the 2025-26 school year.**

## **HONORS NIGHT:**

The 2025 Honors Program is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 7:00 pm. This will **NOT** be required this year. Students receiving an award will be invited to attend the event. Invitations will be mailed out to parents and emailed to students by May 11. Please wear your cap and gown. **If your son/daughter has received a scholarship, please notify Mrs Tietz in the counseling office by May 9, so they may be recognized at the Honors Program. Email – [ltietz@tkschools.org](mailto:ltietz@tkschools.org) or 269-795-5428.**

## **GRADUATION FOR CLASS OF 2026:**

The 2026 Graduation Ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2026, at 7:00 pm, and it will be held in the Thornapple Kellogg High School Stadium. All eligible seniors are expected to participate. Graduates report to the small gym at 6:00 p.m.

**FOLLOWING COMMENCEMENT** it is very important that you report to the auditorium lobby immediately after the end of the commencement program to pick up your diploma. This will be your official diploma (*as an insert*). At the commencement exercise, you will receive only a blank diploma cover. **We give the graduates the one and only diploma—we do not have copies, so please keep your diploma in a safe place.**

## **ATTENTION SENIOR PARENTS:**

Plans are underway for the 2026 Senior Send-Off. This is a parent-sponsored substance-free post-graduation party. Volunteers are needed in order to make this party a success. Join their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61574183399004>

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION OF THE DAY OF GRADUATION ~ MAKE PLANS WITH EMPLOYERS NOW TO HAVE THIS TIME OFF OF WORK!:**

**GRADUATION PRACTICE** is at 8:00 am sharp on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, IN THE BIG GYM. This rehearsal takes time (*approximately 2 hours*). Please plan to be patient and to remain until dismissed by your class advisor. Everyone **MUST BE** present; **this is MANDATORY!** Any student unable to attend should contact Mr. Petersen immediately. You should make your employer aware of this date and time. The ONLY

exception to missing practice is a sports state meet. Caps and gowns are required for practice as we will be conducting a graduation walk-through of all of the TK buildings. We will have a final dress rehearsal after the graduation walk. The day will conclude at approximately 10:45.

**COMMENCEMENT** will be held in the High School Stadium, 3885 Bender Rd. Seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, whether it's indoors or outdoors, no tickets will be required. Gates will NOT open until 6:00 pm. **WE ASK THAT ALL GUESTS OF THE GRADUATES PLEASE REMAIN SEATED UNTIL ALL GRADUATES HAVE LEFT THE STADIUM FOLLOWING THE COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY.** Handicapped seating area will be reserved on the top row of the bleachers. ***Inclement Weather: If commencement has to be moved inside a decision will be made by 3:00 p.m. in order to allow enough time for set up in the gym. Parents and students will be notified via Bright Arrow . If the event is moved to the gym we will have floor seating available directly behind the graduates, for those who have special needs or for those who cannot climb stairs.***

Commencement is a once-in-a-lifetime milestone and we are doing everything we can to make it a happy and dignified occasion. School officials, representatives of the senior class, and faculty ask that the following requests be honored:

- \* Parents and friends are asked to take a seat in the bleachers and be ready so that the program can begin promptly **and remain until after the graduates leave the stadium or gym.**
- \* Parents and friends are asked to refrain from talking or visiting during the program.
- \* Parents and friends are asked to refrain from any clapping, yelling, whistling, or other types of exuberance when the names of the graduates are called for diplomas. Although this is a momentous event, we believe that such conduct detracts from the dignity of the exercise.
- \* **Seniors; beach balls, frisbees, powder, etc., detracts from the elegance of the commencement ceremony so please do not bring them into the gym or stadium during graduation.**
- \* Parents and seniors, please be aware that there is a commencement dress code. **We ask that all seniors wear appropriate graduation attire.** For the men, a collared shirt and dress pants and for the women, a dress or blouse with a skirt or dress slacks. Footwear is required for safety reasons and tennis shoes are not considered appropriate attire.
- \* Should a senior report for commencement and it is apparent the student is under the influence of an illegal substance, the individual will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony. The graduation ceremony is like any other extracurricular activity to which school policies apply.
- \* Students should understand that as the end of the school approaches, an administrator's disciplinary options diminish to the point that revoking graduation privileges may be the only remaining option.

### **PICTURES AND VIDEO CAMERAS**

Graduation is important to all those who attend and everyone wishes to see that special person receive his/her diploma. Those guests wishing to record the ceremony are asked to set up their equipment on the walkway behind the bleachers in the stadium or the south balcony of the gym. The press box will not be available to parents. Thank you for cooperating and making this an enjoyable event for all those attending.

**Pictures** - No one will be permitted on the floor/field during the ceremony to take pictures. A professional photographer (Geskus) will be at Commencement to take photos of each graduate as they are presented with their diploma cover. Proofs will be emailed to you directly after the ceremony, you may choose to order copies; you are under no obligation to purchase these photos.

### **SENIOR SKIP DAY**

Each year the question of senior skip day is asked. **The Thornapple Kellogg School District does not sponsor or permit a senior skip day and those absent are subject to the provisions of the attendance and discipline policies.** As indicated in the enclosed calendar, seniors are granted an early dismissal. The last date of regular classes for seniors is Friday, May 15, 2026. Students participating in a skip day will be marked as unexcused.

### **SENIOR PRANKS**

Each year seniors have a desire to leave their mark on the school. Please remember that you leave behind a legacy when you graduate. It would be a shame to tarnish that in any way. **The Thornapple Kellogg School District does not endorse or permit senior pranks.** Any activities that disrupt the educational environment in any way, cause damage to objects, school property, etc., cause harm or offend others, or violate the student code of conduct in any way, **shall result in revoking the privilege, of the students involved, of participating in the graduation ceremony.**

### **FINAL TRANSCRIPTS**

Please order your **FINAL TRANSCRIPT** in Parchment (go to [tkschools.org](https://www.tkschools.org), high school, student services, blue order button). When placing your order the "order details" default will say "Send Now" but you will need to select the **"Hold for Grades"** option. We do NOT automatically send your transcript, you must order it in Parchment. ALSO, at the end of the year please add your personal email to your Parchment account. On August 1, 2026, you will become an alumnus. When you order from Parchment after August 1 there will be a charge of \$4.25.

### **SENIOR CALENDAR**

Aug 18	Senior Registration 8-11am & 3-6 p.m		
Aug 25	Day 1		
Sept 5	Photo Make-Up Day		
Oct 6-10	Homecoming Week	Apr 18	Prom - Goei Center 8-11 p.m.
Oct 11	Homecoming Dance	Apr 21	Individual Cap/Gown Photos 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Sept 30	Photo Retakes	May 1	Night With The Stars – 6PM./Powder Puff - 8PM
Oct 17	Senior Cap/Gown/Announcement Meeting - Jostens	May 14-15	Senior Final Exams
Oct 23	Jostens Orders Due!	May 15	Seniors Last Day/Half Day/CLEAN OUT YOUR LOCKER!
Dec 1	Yearbook Photo Due	May 19	Graduation Practice 8:00 a.m SHARP
Dec 10	1st Semester Exam Exemptions Due	May 19	Honors Program 7:00 p.m. - Seniors report at 6:30 PM to big gym
Dec 17-19	Exams	May 21	Graduation 7:00 p.m. - Seniors report at 6:00 PM to big gym