Seneca Valley High School Graduation  
Class of 2015  
Information for Parents and Guardians

1. **Graduation Ceremony and Rehearsal:** The 2015 Graduation Ceremony will take place at the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Constitution Hall, 18th & D Streets, N.W., Washington D.C., at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, May 29, 2015. Doors open at 9:00 a.m. **Mandatory graduation rehearsal** will take place on Thursday, May 28, 2015, from 7:30 – 11:30 a.m. in the Seneca Valley High School auditorium. Rehearsal is MANDATORY for ALL SENIORS who are graduating. Caps, gowns, and tickets will be distributed at the end of rehearsal. If a student does not attend rehearsal, he/she will **not** be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony. Students who still have obligations will not be permitted to participate in the rehearsal or graduation ceremony.

2. **Time of Arrival on May 29th:** On graduation day, seniors must arrive at DAR Constitution Hall **no later than 9:00 a.m.**, as they will be lined up for the processional at 9:15 a.m. Seniors must be in the processional line in order to participate. They will not be permitted to enter the main floor once the ceremony begins; the doors close at 9:45 a.m. **Graduates should enter through the C Street (females) or D Street (males) entrance.**

3. **Directions:** Please use the internet to find directions if you are planning to drive to DAR.

4. **Metro:** Take Metro to the Farragut West station. Walk 5 blocks south on 17th street to D Street.

5. **Bus Transportation:** Tickets for round-trip bus transportation from Seneca Valley to DAR will be sold on a **first-come, first-served basis.** The tickets are $25.00 per person and are non-refundable. If graduates are taking the bus, they must purchase tickets as well. Complete and return the form found in this packet by May 28, 2015, to Susan Bridge. Buses will depart from the front of the school at 7:30 a.m. and leave DAR immediately after the graduation ceremony.

6. **Daytime Parking:** On-street parking is metered and most meters do not expire until 6:30 p.m. Constitution Hall has asked us to remind parents/guardians and guests that **if a car is parked in the metered space for more than two hours, they are ticketing the car (even if there is still money left in the meter).** Arrangements have been made with the George Washington University to permit the use of their parking facilities (on a space-available basis) during the weeks of commencements. The two visitor locations available are at the Marvin Center Garage on H Street, N.W., between 21st Street and 22nd Street; and the University Parking Garage on I Street between 22nd Street and 23rd Street.

7. **Facility:**
   A. **Seniors:** Proceed to and enter through the **C Street (females) or D Street (males) entrance** with your cap and gown in your possession (this is your ticket to get into DAR and the ceremony). Line up will occur in the C and D Street lobbies. Males will line up on the D Street lobby side and females will line up on the C Street lobby side. Parents/guardians and guests will not be permitted in these locations prior to the ceremony. Students will not rejoin their families again until diplomas have been distributed; therefore, please determine a meeting place outdoors for your family/guests following the ceremony.
   B. **Parents/Guardians & Guests:** Doors open at 9:00 a.m. and close at 9:45 a.m.; and reopen after the processional. Everyone attending graduation must have a ticket. General admission entrance is through the main entrance on 18th street. Please do not use the C or D Street entrances.
C. **Handicapped Guests**: A doorman/ticket taker and security officer will be stationed at the **D Street entrance** for the convenience of all guests with disabilities who arrive by vehicle or use the driveway to avoid the front steps. Remember that all guests, including those who are handicapped, cannot enter DAR until 9:00 a.m.

D. **Translation Services**: Translation services will be provided by MCPS as needed. We do not control the languages that MCPS will accommodate. In the past, MCPS has typically provided translation services for those languages that are the most requested. We will use the information provided on the Senior Parent Survey 2015 to make these requests.

8. **Videotaping/Photography**: We recommend that parents/guardians take pictures at home and before or after the ceremony. We encourage you to refrain from taking pictures during the ceremony, as it can be a disruptive experience for other guests. No filming will be permitted from the aisles, in front of the stage, or on the stage.

A professional photographer will take a picture of each graduate shaking hands with Mr. Cohen, Principal, and also as each graduate leaves the stage with his/her diploma cover. Professional photographs from the graduation will be available to purchase online after Tuesday, June 2, 2015. For purchase go to [www.freedspirit.com](http://www.freedspirit.com), select “VIEW YOUR PHOTOS” and use password: **SVHSGRAD15**. If you have any questions about graduation photographs, please contact Freed Spirit directly by phone at 301-652-5452 or by email at info@freedphoto.com.
Seneca Valley High School and MCPS have also arranged for professional taping of the ceremony. DVDs may be purchased for $15.00 through Mrs. Anderson by June 5, 2015. We have included an order form at the back of this packet. Please be advised that DAR Constitution Hall has very rigid photography restrictions.

9. **General Information:**
   A. The ceremony should end no later than 12:00 p.m. We will need to vacate the premises immediately to accommodate any proceeding events.
   B. Security personnel have the authority to remove individuals who do not act in accordance with established ceremonial guidelines.
   C. **YOU MUST HAVE A TICKET TO ATTEND THE GRADUATION CEREMONY.** Everyone attending graduation at DAR must have a ticket. If you have extra tickets available, please return them to Dyan Gomez, Assistant Principal, at Seneca Valley so they may be given to other families in need of extra tickets.
   D. If a guest from your party is handicapped and will be sitting in the designated handicapped areas, please note that **ONLY ONE OTHER PERSON** may accompany them into the designated seating area.
   E. All graduates will enter from the 18th Street Lobby area. They will process down the center aisle.
   F. Smoking is not permitted.
   G. Each graduate will receive 6 tickets for his/her family at the end of the rehearsal. Extra tickets will be available by advanced written request only to Mrs. Lee Ann Wolfe, Class Sponsor. Graduates will not be given more than a total of 12 tickets. Please do not request more tickets than you need. Extra ticket requests will be accepted by Mrs. Wolfe no later than Friday, May 8, 2015, by providing information on the Senior Parent Survey 2015.

10. **Academic Attire:**
    A. **Males**
       a. Wrinkle-free, green graduation gown **(Do not iron your gown)**
       b. Green mortarboard with tassel (on right); no signs/symbols on top of mortarboard
       c. Long dress pants
       d. Dress shoes with socks
       e. White shirt with collar and tie
       f. Jewelry should not be worn outside of academic robe.
    B. **Females**
       a. Wrinkle-free, gold graduation gown **(Do not iron your gown)**
       b. Gold mortarboard with tassel (on right); no signs/symbols on top of mortarboard
       c. Dress or skirt and blouse – light colors are bests (dark colors show through the gown)
       d. Dress shoes. No flip flops or very high heels (both may cause females to trip on the marble floor and steps).
       e. Clothing, jewelry, and accessories should not be visible outside of the gown
       f. Avoid large droop earrings
    C. The mortarboard should be worn so that it is parallel to the floor and flat on the head. Use bobby pins to secure the mortarboard. During the processional and through the awarding of diplomas, the tassel is worn on the right side of the mortarboard. Upon signal from the stage and after ALL graduates have been awarded diplomas, the tassels will be shifted to the left side.
    D. **Cell phones, chewing gum, sunglasses, purses, signs, decorations, etc. are not permitted in the ceremony.** Any of those items will be confiscated by ushers and the students may be removed by DAR security. No security is available for items left in the lobby.
The graduation ceremony is not the place for individualism. No one is required to participate in the ceremony in order to receive a diploma; those who choose to participate are expected to be cooperative members of the senior class and qualified candidates for a Maryland Diploma.

11. **Awarding of Diplomas:** Diploma covers will be handed to the graduates on stage. Graduates must pick up diplomas after the ceremony in one of the designated areas in the lobby. Please reserve your applause until all graduates have received their diploma covers. This is a dignified ceremony – whistling, yelling, cheering, etc. is not appropriate. A graduate’s diploma may be withheld if he/she or his/her guests exhibit such behavior.

12. **Tassel Ceremony and Closing:** The closing of the ceremony is the tassel turning. Graduates will rise and remain standing during this part of the ceremony. Immediately after the tassel turning, the band will play the recessional. Graduates are not permitted to throw their mortarboards as this may cause injuries to fellow graduates and guests. Graduates and faculty will exit through the side doors. Parents and guardians must plan to meet graduates outside the building in your pre-designated area.

13. **Contact Information:** In the event that you have questions about the upcoming ceremony or senior events, please contact –

   - Mrs. Dyan Gomez (senior administrator) at Dyan_K_Gomez@mcpsmd.org
   - Ms. Natasha Ezerski (co-graduation coordinator) at Natasha_L_Ezerski@mcpsmd.org
   - Mr. Robert Walko (co-graduation coordinator) at Robert_J_Walko@mcpsmd.org
   - Mrs. Lee Ann Wolfe (senior class sponsor) at LeeAnn_Wolfe@mcpsmd.org

ALL SENEOCA VALLEY PARTICIPANTS AND FAMILIES MUST LEAVE THE FACILITY IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CEREMONY

The class of 2015 has been a spectacular ‘class’ of young adults. The ceremony is called a commencement for a reason. The end of their secondary school careers heralds the beginning of the next phase of their lifelong learning journeys. Let’s send them off with style.