



April 24, 2020

Dear Orenda Public Charter School Families,

District and campus administration have been working this week on changes to grading and end-of-year procedures along with graduation. Below are updates and information with changes and decisions for end-of-year and summer events.

**Grading Procedure Changes:** With distance learning it can be difficult to accurately assess student mastery, and we also want to ensure students are not penalized due to factors outside their control. We have researched and taken into account what other area schools (ISDs and community colleges) are doing along with how changes to grading, GPA, and class rank might affect NCAA and college acceptance in the future. Attached is the "**Orenda Charter School Grading Procedures During Distance Learning**", approved in collaboration with Orenda Charter School Board.

**Material Return and Pick-Up:** Each campus will be coordinating and communicating material return (i.e. uniforms, library books, textbooks, calculators, technology devices, etc.) and pick-up (i.e. locker contents, graduation items, yearbooks, etc.) to follow health and safety requirements.

**Kindergarten Graduation and Award Ceremonies:** Each campus is making plans and decisions about kindergarten graduation and award ceremonies and will communicate out decisions as soon as information is available.

**Instruction to the Last Day:** We are legally required to provide instruction through distance learning until the last instructional day on our approved academic calendars. This means teachers will continue to provide instruction, and students will continue to participate in distance learning.

**High School Graduation Ceremonies:** The Governor, in coordination with the Commission of Education and state health officials, has not approved any in-person graduations at this time. Guidance on if schools can have in-person graduations and under what circumstances is expected to be released in 3-4 weeks. While we understand some area schools have chosen to postpone graduation to later in June, large gatherings of people in the near future still pose significant health concerns related to coronavirus. It is also important to us that all our graduates, along with their parents, family, and friends, are able to participate in graduation, which may not be possible with anticipated safety restrictions if in-person graduations are approved or if we postponed to a later date.

For these reasons, we have decided to proceed with a live virtual graduation on the same date and time as originally scheduled. The virtual graduation program will mirror our in-person graduation program with live speakers, senior pictures and



slideshows, and a few other memorable items. Also, unique to this graduation, our students will receive a recorded copy of their high school graduation ceremony.

We know and understand how important high school graduation is to our graduates, parents, staff, friends, and family and are disappointed that we are not able to hold an in-person graduation at this time. With this in-mind, we are planning an in-person **Graduate Farewell** event on **Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>**, provided gathering restrictions are lifted. Tech will be at 1 pm and Prep will be at 4 pm, both in the main Gateway College Preparatory gym. We will celebrate graduate accomplishments and send them off on their post-secondary journey. We are still working on the details and will be gathering input from graduates soon to make this a special event.

**Summer School:** We are working on plans for offering distance learning summer school June 8<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> for Orenda Charter School high school students enrolled at Gateway Prep, Kingsland, and Gateway Tech. Summer school will match our current Gateway Tech distance learning model with online curriculum through GradPoint and teacher support through Zoom. More details, registration, and cost will be coming soon.

These are certainly challenging times. I appreciate your patience and support in navigating all the new information that comes with facilitating your student's learning at home, and am continually impressed with your flexibility and adaptability during such an unprecedented time. Remember, we are here to help and support you and your family in any way we can. Stay safe and take care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Carla Silber' in a cursive script.

Carla Silber  
Superintendent/COO  
Orenda Public Charter School District