

2020 GRADUATION INFORMATION PACKET

FOR THE

***North Texas
Home Educators Network***

29th Annual

**Graduation Exercises
&
Commencement Ceremonies**

SCHEDULED FOR

Saturday, May 30, 2020, 2:00p.m.

TO BE HELD AT

Arapaho Road Baptist Church

2256 Arapaho Road
Garland, Texas 75044





This Is Your Invitation!

You are cordially invited to participate in the 29th Annual North Texas Home Educators Network Homeschool Graduation Exercises & Commencement Ceremonies to be held at 2:00p.m. on May 30, 2020 at Arapaho Road Baptist Church, 2256 Arapaho Road, Garland, Texas 75044. We know of no event that compares with our Homeschool graduation and the memorable experience it provides for the graduate, their families, and friends.

If you have a high school student that will be graduating at the conclusion of the 2019-2020 academic year and would like to know more about NTHEN's Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies, please review the detailed information herein and contact us with any questions you may have. We look forward to serving you during this most exciting time for you and your graduate.

The North Texas Home Educators' Network has provided a full program for graduating Homeschool seniors since 1992! We are one of the longest continually running Graduation and Commencement programs designed for homeschooled students in the nation. The key to an outstanding and memorable event is to, first and foremost, cover it with prayer! Detailed planning, and parental & student involvement are the remaining key elements.

The graduation ceremony itself is very meaningful and often emotional (bring a box of tissues☺). Students participate from the very beginning of the ceremonies to the conclusion, and parents actually confer the high school diplomas personally to their student(s). The years of teaching and training come to an appropriate graduation (finish) and commencement (beginning) in a way unlike anything you've experienced previously!

Each ceremony includes a commencement speaker providing a message of encouragement and inspiration to the graduate and all who attend. Special music is also provided.

After the graduation ceremony, a grand reception for all the graduates and their families and friends is provided. Appropriate refreshments will be provided and served by NTHEN staff and everyone enjoys the festivities and excitement surrounding this event.

On Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 2:00p.m., an important informational meeting will be held at Arapaho Road Baptist Church for all those interested in participating in NTHEN's 2020 Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies. All details of this event will be thoroughly discussed, and prospective graduates may sign up to participate at this meeting.

Also, during this meeting, parents and students will begin planning activities for their senior year. **Please note that graduating student activities is a PARENT-LEAD function.** NTHEN has no responsibility for planning or accomplishing student activities. NTHEN's function is to simply act as a facilitator, as needed. A parent volunteer to lead this activity will be solicited.

In past years, student activities have been very diverse such as barbeques, swimming parties, sporting activities, cookouts, nights at the movies, and more! All of these activities provide opportunity for participating seniors to get to know one another and enjoy graduating with classmates, not strangers. Indeed, many become fast friends! This is such an important part of the Homeschooling experience and NTHEN encourages this type of fun, fellowship and activities.

Remember, all events related to our 2020 Graduation, including the graduation event itself, will be held at **Arapaho Road Baptist Church, 2256 Arapaho Road, Garland, Texas 75044.** And, **YOU** are invited!



PLANNING MEETING MEMORANDIUM

TO: All Homeschool Families with a prospective 2020 graduate

FROM: Kathie Lunsford, NTHEN Vice president of Events and Director of Graduation Services

SUBJECT: 2020 Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies Planning Meeting Plus General Information About This Event

The 2020 **Graduation Planning Meeting** is scheduled for Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 2:00p.m. Location of this meeting will be in the Choir Room at **Arapaho Road Baptist Church, 2256 Arapaho Road, Garland, Texas 75044**. We will be discussing the details of NTHEN's 29th annual Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies and the specific purpose of this meeting is to allow parents and graduating seniors alike to become informed and to begin to prepare for a day to celebrate twelve years or more of academic achievements! This will be the only pre-graduation meeting between prospective parents/graduates and the NTHEN staff.

PLEASE PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

At the Graduation Planning Meeting on October 16, 2019, we will thoroughly discuss/review all of the important matters listed below. Please come to these meetings with the intention of not leaving with any unanswered question. Note-taking is encouraged!

- ❑ **The time and location for the 2020 Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies is 2:00pm on May 30, 2020 at Arapaho Road Baptist Church, 2256 Arapaho Road, Garland, Texas 75044. Please do not contact the church with any questions or concerns. All questions should be directed to NTHEN by email to graduation@nthen.org or by calling the NTHEN office at (972) 772-0082.**

“Rules and regulations”

Details of the actual conferring of diplomas.

The reception that follows the Graduation Exercises.

Times for preparation

Decorations and refreshments

Your graduates “table of honor and recognition”

Teardown and cleanup

Ordering diplomas and graduation announcements/invitations

Senior pictures

Senior class activities

Other expenses

Q & A

Costs to Participate in the 2020 Graduation & Commencement Exercise

The graduation fee is \$300.00 for each student. This fee includes all of the features and services shown on Page 5. Payment methods accepted are cash, check, money order; or, Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, American Express.

Additional cost and/or optional items that you may wish to consider purchasing

- ❖ Customized Diploma (leatherette outer case and professional certificate) - \$50 - \$65;
- ❖ Invitations/Announcements cost between \$50 - \$150 depending on style and quantity;
- ❖ Senior Pictures (NTHEN will have a professional photographer available on Graduation Day);
- ❖ Senior Ring;
- ❖ New suit/dress/shoes for the Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies;
- ❖ Private reception for your graduate.

Caps and Gowns

Caps and gowns will be available for distribution at the October 16, 2019 Planning Meeting to those graduates making application and payment that day to participate in our 2020 graduation event. Indeed, graduates are strongly encouraged to make application and pay their graduation fee in full at that initial planning meeting.

Those making application and payment after that date may certainly do so and application approval will be on a first come-first served basis. However, a \$15.00 fee for packaging and postage to send their cap, gown, and tassel to them will be assessed.

NTHEN's graduation colors are purple & white; the cap tassel will include a "2020" emblem.

The caps and gowns are purchased items, the cost of which is included in the graduation fee; therefore, they are yours to keep. Also, please note that with regard to graduation cap size, ONE SIZE FITS ALL!

Be sure to know your graduate's measurements in order to complete the form. Measurements needed are: Height (in shoes) and Weight. **DOUBLE CHECK MEASUREMENTS!** Full figure gowns are available at an additional cost of \$15.00 (total fee would then be \$315.00).

Graduate Guidelines Stipulations

As a participant in our Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies, parents and graduates understand and agree to the stipulations contained in the GRADUATION GUIDELINES and the STUDENT REGISTRATION sections found on Pages 10,11, 12 and 13 of this document. Those pages must be initialed/signed/completed as required and returned to NTHEN at the U. S Mail address, fax number, or email address shown below.

As we approach this very special time, I look forward to helping you in every way possible so that your student's graduation is meaningful, memorable and fulfilling.

Grace and Peace,

Kathie Lunsford

Vice President of Events and
Director of Graduation Services

Mailing Address:
North Texas Home Educators Network
709B West Rusk Street, #577
Rockwall, TX 75087
972-772-0082 (O)
972-722-7798 (F)
graduation@nthen.org

Graduation Fee

The \$300.00 Graduation Fee per student includes ...*

Item or Service

- Church Facility Usage including Church Sanctuary, Foyer, Rest Rooms, Reception Hall, Kitchen, Pre- Graduation Meeting Room, and Usage of All Parking Lots
- Sound & Lighting Technicians
- Decorations & Signage
- Reception Hall Setup and Decorations
- Cleanup of all facilities after the event
- Graduates Purple Cap & Gown*
- 2020 graduation year Tassel for Cap
- Provision of space for two Pre-graduation meetings
- Master of Ceremonies for the Event
- Commencement Speaker Honorarium
- Vocalist and/or Special Music Honorarium
- Pianist and/or Organist and/or Harpist Honorarium
- Graduation Programs - Development, Printing, Folding
- Floor Length Purple Tablecloth for your Graduate's Table of Honor
- Reception Server Staff
- Cakes & Punch for Graduate Reception
- Eating Utensils, Cups, Plates & Napkins
- All Transportation Costs

** Full figure gowns are an additional \$15.00*

Total value of these services if contracted separately:

Over \$900.00!

THIS PICTURE IS REPRESENTATIVE
OF AN *NTHEN* SPONSORED
HOME EDUCATED HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATING CLASS.





NTHEN Statement of Faith

The purpose of this Statement of Faith is to set forth the Judeo Christian beliefs the Officers and Directors of The North Texas Home Educators' Network Board practice in their personal and professional lives.

First and foremost, we proclaim The Holy Bible to be the inspired Word of God, perfect as originally written under the direct inspiration of The Holy Spirit, and the complete revelation of God's will for salvation through faith through His Son, Jesus Christ.

(Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; II Timothy 3:15-16; Hebrews 4:12; II Peter 1:20-21)

Secondly, we testify that there is one and only one true God, Creator of all things, Who has existed from all eternity, in three Persons: God The Father, God The Son (Jesus Christ), and God The Holy Spirit. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being. All three Beings are perfect, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and have equal power, and all three Beings are deserving of praise, honor and worship.

(Genesis 1-3; I Chronicles 29:10; John 1:1-3; I Corinthians 8:6; Philippians 2:6-8; I Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 9:14; I John 5)

Thirdly, we believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, His miraculous conception by The Holy Spirit, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His substitutionary physical death on a cross, His Burial, His bodily resurrection on the third day, His ascension into Heaven to the right hand of God The Father, and we believe in His imminent return.

(Psalm 110:1; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 27-28:10; John 16:28; Acts 1:11)

In addition, we confess that all men are in violation of God's righteous requirements and therefore, all men are subject to His wrath and just condemnation, which is an earthly death followed by eternal punishment in the lake of fire.

(Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15)

However, God The Father, in His infinite wisdom and loving grace and mercy, provides The Way through His Son Jesus Christ. Salvation is offered as a free gift to all who will admit sin, believe on The Lord, and confess with their lips that Jesus is The Savior. This gift of salvation is an individual decision, based on faith, completely autonomous from any and all "good works." Salvation is obtained through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

(John 3:16; 14: 6; Romans 4:24-5:2; I Corinthians 15:1-11; Ephesians 2:8-10; I John 1:8-10)

TEXAS HOMESCHOOLING LAW (Education Code)

Alternative Statutes Allowing for Home Schools:

1) Texas Education Code Annotated 21.033 (a) (1). "Any child in attendance upon a private or parochial school which shall include in its course a study of good citizenship" is exempt from the requirements of compulsory attendance. The class action suit, *Leeper v. Arlington Independent School District*, No. 17-88761-85 Tarrant County 17th Judicial Ct. Apr. 13, 1987, resulted in a trial level decision in favor of home schooling. The court ruled that:

a) Home schools can legally operate as private schools in Texas;

b) Article 7, section 2 of the Texas Constitution only authorizes the legislature to establish and maintain public education, not private or parochial education;

c) Home schools must be conducted in a bona fide manner, using a written curriculum consisting of reading, spelling, grammar, math and a course in good citizenship. No other requirements apply.

d) The court ruled that the interpretation of the law cannot be left to each criminal prosecution. "If arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement is to be prevented, laws must provide explicit standards for those who apply them."

e) This judgment does not preclude the Texas Education Agency, the Commissioner of Education, or the State Board of Education from suggesting to the public school attendance officer's lawful methods, including but not limited to **inquiry** concerning curricula and standardized test scores, in order to ascertain if there is compliance with the declaration contained in this judgment.

f) On November 27, 1991, the Court of Appeals of Texas completely affirmed the case (Leeper). The Court stated that the Texas Education Agency "deprived the Homeschool parents of equal protection under the law" since their private schools in the home were unfairly discriminated against "on the sole basis of location in the home," rather than outside the home.

g) On June 15, 1994, the Texas Supreme Court unanimously affirmed the Court of Appeals decision in TEA, et al. V. Leeper, et al.

2) In 1989, the Texas legislature exempted private and parochial schools from new requirements for schools, and in the process, confirmed that the term "private school" includes home schools. "Nothing in the act applies to students in attendance upon a private or parochial school, which includes home schools, in accordance with 21.033, Education Code."

Teacher Qualifications: None

Standardized Tests: None. The court in Leeper specifically stated that the school district could not regulate standardized testing.

“What high school level courses need to be successfully completed by my home-educated student in preparation for college entrance?”

[SUGGESTED HIGH SCHOOL COURSE OUTLINE FOR HOME SCHOOL GRADUATES SEEKING COLLEGE ADMISSION]

<u>Subject/Course</u>	<u>Generally Acceptable Minimum Requirements</u>	<u>Strongly Recommended</u>
Language Arts (Grammar, Composition, English, Literature, Writing)	4 Units/Credits	4 Units/Credits
Mathematics (Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus, Statistics)	3 Units/Credits	4 Units/Credits
Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Anatomy, Physiology)	3 Units/Credits	4 Units/Credits
Social Studies (History, Government, Economics, Geography)	3 Units/Credits	4 Units/Credits
Foreign Language (Spanish, German, French, Russian, Sign Language)	2 Units/Credits (Same Language)	3 Units/Credits (Same Language)
Fine Arts (Bible, Drama, Art, Theatre, Drawing, Speech)	1/2 Unit/Credit	1 Unit/Credit
Health	1/2 Unit/Credit	1/2 Unit/Credit
Physical Education	1½ Units/Credits	1½ Units/Credits
Computer Science	1 Unit/Credit	2 Units/Credits
General Education (Philosophy, Humanities)	1½ Units/Credits	2 Units/Credits

In addition, most universities PREFER students that have achieved a high SAT score (1800 and higher) or a high ACT score (29 and higher). Your student should strive for these results. Note, however, that many colleges/universities *will accept* students with SAT or ACT scores lower than those shown above.

Additionally, entrance examinations may be required and other prerequisites may apply to each specific college or university. This information is offered merely as a guide for use by Homeschooled high school students.

To determine specific requirements for admission to the institution(s) of higher learning in which your student has interest, you should obtain an undergraduate catalog available from the Office of Admissions of those institutions and refer to admissions information contained therein.

GRADUATION GUIDELINES & AGREEMENT

In order to conduct Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies that will truly honor all graduating students, the following guidelines are required by NTHEN.

- **Setup of Your Graduate's Honor Table**

ON THE DAY OF GRADUATION (Saturday May 30, 2020), ALL TABLE DECORATIONS MUST BE SET UP AND COMPLETED BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 9:00a.m. AND 12:00 NOON (not before and not after as the facilities are in use). Decorations must be removed immediately after the reception. **All tables are 60" round and NTHEN will provide a custom fit purple tablecloth for each table. NTHEN recommends that each graduate family participate in decorating a table in honor of their graduate. Visit the NTHEN web site, at the bottom of the "Graduation" page, to view a video showing the range of table decorations.**

- **Respect for the Church Facilities and the Graduation Ceremony**

- Please, no "borrowing" of Church property (scissors, tape, etc.).
- Do not use Church telephones. Also, on the day of Graduation and on the pre-graduation meeting date outlined herein, the event coordinators telephone number will be 214-422-1156.
- Do not attach anything to any wall.
- Electricity is not available.
- Please do not bring children while you are decorating your graduate's table.
- On Graduation Day, **children must be supervised at all times**. They will not be allowed to "explore" the facilities or behave in an improper manner.
- Please promptly remove any crying or disturbing child during the Ceremonies in respect to the graduates and others in attendance.

Parent initials here: _____

- **Parent and Graduate Guidelines**

- Graduate agrees to wear the NTHEN designated cap, gown, and tassel during the Graduation Exercises and Commencement Ceremonies.
- Academic achievement designations (braid, sashes, pins, etc.) may NOT be worn DURING THE CEREMONY OR WHEN THE GROUP GRADUATION PICTURE IS TAKEN. After the ceremony at the reception is fine.
- A "walk-through" Rehearsal will be held on **the day of Graduation** in the Sanctuary at 12:00 Noon. **THIS IS A MANDATORY MEETING FOR ALL GRADUATES. PLEASE, DO NOT BE LATE FOR THIS FINAL REHEARSAL. THIS IS IMPORTANT!**
- **The Graduation Ceremony will begin sharply at 2:00 p.m. on May 30, 2020.**

- **Graduates, remember, THIS IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME FORMAL EVENT!**
- The dress code for all graduates is "Sunday-best". So, please...
 - **No jeans, shorts, T-shirts, or flip-flops.**
 - **No writing on caps or gowns.**
 - **Sit erect with feet together during the ceremony.**
 - **And, of course, absolutely, no chewing gum!!**
- **DO NOT BE LATE!** Make arrangements and preparations to be on time for all graduation functions. Lateness by just one graduate creates an undue burden on the entire ceremony, the event coordinating staff, and the other participating graduates.
- 1. PARENTS, BE PREPARED to confer your student's diploma. In the weeks leading up to the event, practice what you wish to say so that you will be more comfortable during your actual presentation. Use written notes to help you remember what you want to say. But remember, this is NOT the time or place to recite all the accomplishments your graduate has achieved during their years of Homeschooling (See #2 following). A brief summary of your student's accomplishments and a word of encouragement in Christian love is recommended.
- 2. PARENTS, you MUST adhere to a strict time limit of 2 minutes for conferring your graduate's diploma. This is to keep the program timetable in balance and to be respectful of the other graduate families and their guests.
- 3. PARENTS: The dress code for parents (or others) conferring a diploma is "Sunday best". This means no jeans, shorts, T shirts or flip flops. **THIS IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME FORMAL EVENT! Please dress accordingly.**
- 4. PARENTS: Please remember that a maximum of 3 persons should come on stage for the conferring of your students diploma.
- GUESTS (family and others): Please inform all guests of these guidelines and especially encourage them to NOT BE LATE AND TO REMAIN SEATED DURING THE CEREMONY as movement during the ceremony can be very disruptive to other guests and to NTHEN staff conducting the ceremony. Also, improper behavior by one person towards another person or to church property will result in the removal of the offending person(s) from this event. This is a NO TOLERANCE requirement.
- All cell telephones and pagers must be turned off or on "silent" or "vibrate" during the ceremony.
- Pets are not allowed in the church except for service animals professionally trained to assist a physically impaired graduate, family member, or guest.

We agree to these NTHEN Guidelines for participation in their 2019 Graduation and Commencement Event.

Parent Signature and Date

Graduate Signature and Date



2020 Graduation Registration Form

Please Print Clearly!!

TODAY'S DATE: ____/____/____

GRADUATE CANDIDATE INFORMATION:

Please Print Clearly!!

1. Graduate candidate's FULL Name: _____
2. Street Address (No P.O. Boxes): _____
3. City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
4. A. Your gender is: M F
B. Your height is: _____ Ft. _____ In.
C. Your date of birth is: _____/_____/_____
5. Graduate candidates's Home telephone #: (_____) _____
6. Graduate candidates's Cell telephone #: (_____) _____
7. Graduate candidates's E-Mail Address: _____

NOTE: Please include either a digital or a hard copy picture of your graduate with this registration.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Please Print Clearly!!

8. Parent's/Guardian's Names: _____
9. Parent's/Guardian's e-mail address: _____/_____
10. Parent's/Guardian's telephone numbers: Cell: _____
Home: _____
11. By the date of graduation, how many years has your student has been homeschooled?

12. What is the name of the local homeschool support group of which your family is a member?



FEES AND PAYMENT METHODS

13. **Graduation Fee is \$300.00*** (*Full figure gowns are an additional \$15.00 for a total of \$315.00.)

14. **PAYMENT METHODS ACCEPTED** (Circle payment method of you choose and complete requested information.)

A. Check _____ Check #: _____ Date of Check: ____/____/____ Amount Paid: \$ _____ (Make checks payable to NTHEN and BE SURE TO PLACE YOUR GRADUATES NAME ON THE "MEMO" LINE!)
B. Credit Card Visa—MC—Discover Card #: _____ Exp. Date: ____/____/____ CVC #: _____ Name on Card: _____ Zip Code: _____
C. CASH Amount Paid: \$ _____ Initials of NTHEN officer receiving cash: _____

15. Date cap, gown, tassel provided to parent or graduate candidate: ____/____/____

Initials: _____

16. Initial or sign pages 10, 11 & 12 of this document as specified and return (keep a copy for your records) to NTHEN by: 1). **MAIL** to: NTHEN 709B West Rusk Street, #577, Rockwall, TX 75087; or by: 2). **FAX** to 972-722-7798 (available 24/7/365); or by: 3). **SCANNING AND EMAILING** to: graduation@nthen.org.

Parent Initial Here: _____

NTHEN Initial Here: _____



For information about the
North Texas Home Educators Network,
please visit our web site at www.nthen.org
or email us at staff@nthen.org.

Telephone: 972-772-0082
Fax: 972-722-7798

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