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Horizon Science Academy seniors, kindergartners graduates celebrate as one

By **Briana Contreras**
The Morning Journal

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Seventy kindergartners and 19 seniors of Horizon Science Academy, 760 Tower Blvd. in Lorain, were applauded by their school community, family and first responders May 23 during their Cap and Gown Walk.

Seniors held the hands of the kindergartners in their journey.

The graduates first began the celebration outside of the school as they walked across campus and back inside to the gymnasium.

The event concluded with a performance by the kindergarten graduates who sang a song.

Samantha Thompson, administrative assistant and assistant dean, said the kindergarten students and senior graduates will have their ceremonies held on separate days.

Having a combined celebration for kindergarten and senior graduates is an outstanding opportunity for the students, Thompson said.

"It's so amazing to do this because, here at Horizon, we take pride in being a family, and this moment shows through our community members, through our staff, our students and partnership with our parents," she said. "That right there is a beautiful thing to celebrate for our kids here. It's an achievement they deserve so well."

On normal school days, the older students aren't able to interact with the youngsters in school, Thompson said.

All of the students usually come together during events or when the



Paige Nichols and Carlos Rosado walk with members of the kindergarten graduating class during their Cap and Gown Walk May 23, 2018. Briana Contreras — The Morning Journal

older pupils volunteer their time to the youngsters in programs, she said.

The Cap and Gown Walk recognizes and celebrates their achievements together, Thompson said.

"This moment allows our seniors to reflect, right before they graduate, the moments when they started kindergarten," she said. "It allows them to take a jog down memory lane.

"It also gives the excitement for our kindergarten students to be ready to take on the challenge of first-grade."

Thompson said the Cap and Gown Walk gets the youngsters excited and encourages them to express joy and the pride of hard work.

"It's a priceless moment," she said.

Horizon Principal Fatih Sumer said that having seniors and kindergarten graduates experience this is special.

The support shown this year is needed for all students, Thompson said.

"The (support) means a lot to them to see they are not alone on this journey,"

Sumer said. "They see that their parents, community members and everyone here are here for them. They make it very meaningful."

This year's Cap and Gown Walk was the second between both grades, she said.

It's also the third year of a graduation class at Horizon, Sumer said.

One hundred percent of all graduating seniors received college acceptance and received \$3.2 million in scholarships this year.

Thompson said all graduates and current students receive a college-prep education beginning at the middle school grade level.

She said Horizon provides students with the resources that can offer them many opportunities like scholarships and volunteer work.

Seniors will graduate at 6 p.m., May 24, in the school's auditorium.

The kindergarten graduation starts at 12:30 p.m., June 5, also at the school.