

Every year in May, I get asked, "What should I tell senior portrait photographers who want to know what my specifications for seniors are?"

Do we have just what you need? We sure do! Here is a great example of what you should send them. We asked some of our most experienced advisers what they tell their senior portrait photographers and put the best of what these advisers told us into this article for you to use.

You can use this form as is, or you can change things so that they work for you and your school. Either way, we hope the list helps.

You may decide that these are either too lax or too restrictive. They are for you to use as a guideline. Some schools go so far as to tell seniors what they are allowed to wear. Many still require caps and gowns or tuxedos for guys and fur drapes for girls. Others allow any kind of picture at all as long as it is the correct size. We do recommend that you limit background colors if you are going to be printing the pictures in color. Bright or outdoor backgrounds tend to draw attention from the faces themselves to the backgrounds.

One last note. Please see the last item at right—the special note to photographers. A great way for them to submit to you digitally is through your ImageShare website on Yearbook Avenue.

Sample Senior Portrait Specifications for the Yearbook

Below is a set of sample senior portrait specifications. This should be sent to all seniors, their parents and all photographers who you think will be sending you portraits. It is important that parents receive this as some will attempt to take their own pictures.

Ideally, these specs should be sent out to photographers in May or June and to parents with whatever back-to-school mailing your school sends out. If specifications such as these have not been sent out prior to the end of the previous year, it may be too late to invoke them at the start of the year. Many of the portraits may already be taken. You may need to live with what you get in your first year and make these changes for the coming year.

Senior Portrait Specifications for the Yearbook

It's time to have your child's senior portrait taken if you haven't already. Pictures are due to the yearbook staff October 15, 2010. Portraits received after October 15 are not guaranteed to be included in the yearbook.

Summer is a great time to get portraits taken. Not only do you avoid the rush, but people also tend to be happier with the results. After a two-month rest, students are refreshed, which is reflected in the pictures. Students usually have a healthy glow from the summer sun to both skin and hair.

While most major photography studios in the area already have these specifications, please have your photographer make a print that matches the following:

- Head-and-shoulder shots only.
- No full body, no props. (This rule can save you many problematic discussions.)
- Plain backgrounds preferred in either gray or blue.
No outdoor shots or bright backgrounds allowed.
- Photo size: 1 3/4 inches tall by 1 1/2 inches wide.
Photos can be larger as long as the head size is correct.
- Photos must be vertical.
- Head size from top of head to chin:
1 inch maximum.
- COLOR photos, please.
No black and white.
- Special note to photographers:*

If you are planning to submit photos digitally they must be 120% size at 300 ppi. They can be submitted on CD, DVD or online. Please e-mail us at youryearbook@yourschool.com for upload directions.

