

GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Background

The District believes in honoring the educational achievement of students through annual high school graduation ceremonies. The emphasis of the graduation function is to highlight the student's achievement and celebrate the Eucharist with staff & family. Schools may, through the co-operation of staff, students, parents and community, organize and stage such activities subject to the following procedures.

Procedures

1. Graduation Ceremonies may include the following activities:
Mass or Liturgical celebrations
Graduation/Civic Ceremony
2. Effective 2014-2015, schools will endeavor to move in a direction where Grad Escorts are no longer part of the Graduation or Civic Ceremonies. As the purpose of Graduation is to emphasize the achievement of the student and to provide a safe and caring environment, the old format for Graduation / Civic Ceremonies provided for less than ideal conditions for the celebration of achievement and providing a safe and caring environment. The school shall sponsor the mass/liturgical celebration and civic/graduation ceremony while parents may sponsor a banquet and dance.
3. The Principal will endeavor to hold Graduation Ceremonies that includes Mass/ Liturgy, Graduation Ceremony, and Civic Ceremony. The Principal must arrange for adequate staff supervision for the event.
4. The Principal is required, in advance to reasonable notify and remind students and families that alcohol and drugs are prohibited at the event and students may be removed from the event if they are suspected to be under the influence.
5. The Principal shall determine which costs of conducting the graduation ceremony are to be attributed to the school's budget. The principal may establish a reasonable graduation ceremony student fee for costs she deems attributable to the school's budget.
6. The District, in partnership with high schools, shall provide graduating certificates to the participants.
7. To be eligible to participate in a graduation ceremony a student must satisfy the following criteria:
 - Must be registered in courses that satisfy the student's remaining requirement for an Alberta High School Diploma, a Certificate of High School Achievement (Knowledge & Employability), or a Certificate of School Completion. A principal may withdraw or reinstate the privilege to participate, in consultation with the Superintendent.

8. Graduation functions shall emphasize the graduating class and families.
9. Graduation functions shall promote the good name of each graduate and reflect the Catholic values which are the basis for our mission statement, especially love of God and neighbor. All speakers shall be approved in advance by the Principal. The content of class prophecies or class histories, if given, shall be approved in advance by the Principal and shall not degrade any individual. They will be uplifting and not contain negative put-downs.
10. The Principal shall ensure that the Graduation Ceremony includes:
 - Opening Prayer
 - Remarks from the Superintendent
 - Remarks from the Board Chair or a Local Trustee
 - Recognition of High School feeder school(s)
 - A Valedictorian address; and
 - The presentation of a graduation certificate by the Principal or Designate.
11. The ceremony may include other components including a guest presentation. With prior approval of the Superintendent, the Principal may include additional components to the ceremony provided compliance with administrative procedures is maintained.
12. The District does not sponsor or authorize pre/post graduation celebrations such as Safe Grads, bush parties or grad breakfasts. School staff members shall not be used to organize events other than those authorized by this Administrative Procedure nor shall District facilities be used in this context. Schools are encouraged to promote Dry Grad and staff are encouraged to be part of this planning.
13. The Principal has the authority and responsibility to administer this Administrative Procedure and has discretionary power to make decisions not covered herein.
14. Each high school shall develop expectations and procedures to be followed within the school.

Reference: Section 60, School Act

