

2025/2026

Didsbury High School

Grad Information Night

HIGH SCHOOL

1515-15 Ave





This Evening's Agenda

- ❑ Format of Grad
- ❑ Costs Associated with Graduation
- ❑ Fundraising Opportunities
- ❑ Student Grad Celebrations Planning Committee
- ❑ Parent Celebrations Planning Committee
- ❑ Safe Grad vs. Dry Grad After Parties
- ❑ Formal Graduation Portraits
- ❑ Grad Timeline (Year at a Glance)
- ❑ Graduation Key Contacts

DHS Cap and Gown Ceremony

Date: Friday, May 22, 2026

Time: 7:00PM

Location: DHS Gym

- The Cap and Gown is organized and set up by the staff of DHS.
- This is our formal ceremony in which students receive an “unofficial” diploma. The actual high school diploma is sent in the mail directly from AB. Education, once all marks are finalized.
- Each student wears a Cap and Gown with the DHS Stole in this ceremony. Students enter the gym and sit as a group at the front. Each grad comes across the stage to be introduced, receives a school completion certificate, and listens to a message from the class valedictorian.
- For grade 12 students to be eligible to participate in our Cap & Gown Ceremony, they must be registered in sufficient credits to achieve an Alberta High School Diploma or Certificate of High School Completion.
- They will also have passed their necessary courses from semester 1 AND have a passing mark or better in all courses required for an Alberta High School Diploma or Certificate of High School Completion on April 17, 2026.
- The cost of the Cap and Gown will be shared between the school and the participants. The cost charged to grads will be \$35.00. This ceremony is held in conjunction with our Grade 12 Scholarship Ceremony and is open to the public.

Celebrations

Date: Saturday, May 23, 2026

Location: Didsbury Memorial Complex

- This is a parent and student-planned activity to celebrate graduation. However, it is important to remember that CESD insurance is used to insure Celebrations. As such the event must have zero alcohol.
- The agenda for this event is entirely determined by students and parents; DHS Staff Grad Advisors will guide and help where possible, but the planning, decorating, and costs are covered by the grads and families.
- A Celebrations Planning Committee will be formed in October to begin the process of organizing this event.
- The format for Celebrations will be decided upon during the school year, but generally includes:
 - o Banquet
 - o Greetings from Town and County representatives
 - o Toasts (or Tributes)
 - o Grad prepared slideshow
 - o Guest Speaker
 - o Grand March
- Parents and Grad 2026 students should be discussing their vision of Celebrations and plan to attend the Grad Celebration Planning Meeting to talk about possibilities.
- The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 7:00 pm in the DHS Library.
- Gr. 11's will be organized to help with serving, clean up and take down of the Celebrations. Thank you to everyone who "paid this forward" with last years Celebrations

Students must complete the application forms to be considered part of the Cap & Gown and Celebrations events. These are due by the end of October, so the planning committee has concrete numbers to start with. Please return the application forms, whether you want to participate or not.

Celebration Costs

- A approximate cost of the Celebration event is \$175 per grad plus an additional \$35-\$40 per plate for the meal.
- **Optional Items**: these could include:
 - Group Picture in the park
 - Grad Ring from Jostens
 - Grad Clothing
 - Grad Photos from Northern Light Photography

Important Note

School fees must be paid to participate in the graduation ceremonies.

- The school division has a process in place to address families who are not able to pay school fees – this information is included on the Student Invoices that are sent out.
- Financial assistance may be available for grads who need help. Please contact Ms. Harvey, the DHS Finance Admin Support, if you may require assistance or you know of a student who might.

Fundraising Opportunities

- In the last few years, a variety of fundraisers have been used to raise money to help offset the cost of graduation ceremonies.
- Ideas from previous years will be shared at the Parent Organization Committee Meeting.
- All fundraisers need to be cleared by the DHS admin before proceeding in order to avoid conflicts with other school clubs.
- The celebrations planning committee will ensure parents are made aware of fundraising events well in advance.



Student Grad Celebrations Planning Committee

- The Staff Grad Advisors will hold regular meetings with students who are interested in helping to plan Celebrations.
- These students will be responsible for collecting input from the grad class to make decisions that best represent the majority of the class's preferences.
- Representatives of this group will be required to attend the Celebrations Planning Committee to work with the parent group.



Parent Celebrations Planning Committee

- This parent working group helps facilitate the grad class's plans by booking facilities, caterers, light & sound etc.
- This group will also coordinate decorating. It is important to remember that a large amount of volunteers will be needed in the week leading up to celebrations to help decorate the memorial complex. Many hands make light work for everyone!
- The chair will communicate with the student executive and the staff advisor. The first meeting will be on **October 14, 2025, at 7:00 pm in the DHS Library.**



Safe Grad vs. Dry Grad After Parties

- DHS **cannot** be involved in any aspect of Safe Grad due to alcohol being involved. This includes the sharing of information or promoting the event with other parents.
- If a Safe Grad is planned, please take into consideration that the grade 11's will be involved with cleaning the arena before they are allowed to join the safe grad party.
- If a Dry Grad is planned, this information can be shared through our website and emails to parents.



Formal Graduation Portraits

- Grad Portraits are with Northern Light Photography, and the sittings will be held the week of February 16 to 20, 2026.
- Parents are not obligated to purchase the Northern Light Photo package, but all students need to arrange for a sitting, as this is the photo used for our yearbook and Composite Grad Photo.
- The DHS Grad Advisors will release details and accept booking times as determined with Northern Light Photography.



Grad 2026 Timeline

Oct

Nov/Dec

Feb/Mar

Apr

May

Organization Begins

- Initial grad meeting
- First Celebrations planning meeting
 - Determine possible fundraising ideas
- Grad logo/clothing

Planning

- Grad committee meeting
- Celebrations planning/bookings continue
 - Caterer and DJ booked
- Decorating sub-committee begins working on Celebrations
- Grad banners are organized

More Planning

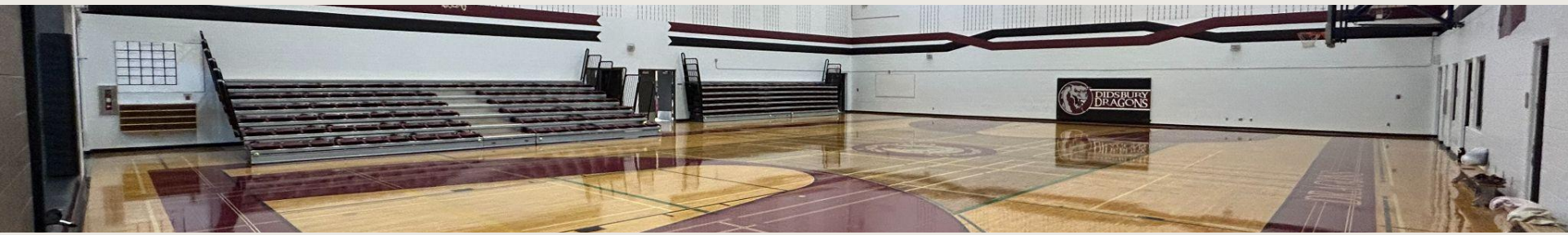
- Grad committee finalizes plans for decorations and setup of arena
- **Grad Portraits (Feb. 16-20, 2026)**
 - Finalize guest speakers and program

Nearing the Event

- Finalize grad list (April 17, 2026)
 - Fees are paid in full
- Organization of arena setup/decorating are finalized
- Gr. 11's are organized for serving and clean up

Grad is Here!

- Grad setup in Gym at DHS and decoration of arena (May 18-21, 2026)
 - Cap & Gown walkthrough (12PM on May 22, 2026)
- Grand March walkthrough at arena (immediately following cap & gown walkthrough)



Next Steps Before You Leave

1. Please make sure you have signed in so that we know who was present this evening.
2. Grab an information package with everything you need from this evening.
3. Ensure the following two forms are signed and returned to the office before October 31, 2025:
 - ✓ Celebrations - Application to Participate
 - ✓ Cap & Gown - Application to Participate





Key Contacts

DHS Administrative Team

- Tyler Jesse (Principal)
tjesse@cesd73.ca
- Helen Hammel (Vice-Principal)
hhammel@cesd73.ca

DHS Staff Advisors

- Molly Lerbekmo (Student Grad Group Coordinator)
mlerbekmo@cesd73.ca
- Catherine Morgan (Cap & Gown Organization)
cmorgan@cesd73.ca
- Cali Beazley (Grand March Coordinator)
cbeazley@cesd73.ca