

## Administrative Procedure 375

### HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONIES

#### Background

The Division believes in honouring the educational achievement of students through annual high school graduation ceremonies.

#### Procedures

1. By September 30, the Principal shall establish a date for the graduation ceremony;
  - 1.1 The graduation ceremony shall throughout its entirety respect the dignity of the students, their families, invited guests and other members of the audience.
2. The Division, in partnership with the high schools, shall provide graduation certificates to the participants.
3. Principals shall ensure that students are advised of the criteria for eligibility to participate in the graduation ceremony as early in the students' high school program as appropriate.
  - 3.1 To be eligible to participate in a fall graduation ceremony after the completion of the grade twelve year, a student must satisfy the requirements of an Alberta High School Diploma or Certificate of Achievement.
  - 3.2 To be eligible to participate in a graduation ceremony prior to the completion of grade twelve year, a student must satisfy the following criteria.
    - 3.2.1 A minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the graduation ceremony, a student:
      - 3.2.1.1 Must be registered in a program of studies, maintaining regular attendance and possess a minimum grade of fifty percent (50%) in each course, which if successfully completed by the end of the current school year would fully satisfy all the student's remaining requirements for an Alberta High School Diploma; or
      - 3.2.1.2 Must be registered in a special needs program, maintaining regular attendance in his/her final year of basic education and in a position to complete successfully by the end of the current school year all remaining requirements of his/ her IPP; or
      - 3.2.1.3 With special circumstances who has been recommended by the Principal and approved by the Superintendent may participate in the graduation ceremony. (e.g. exchange student, former Northern Gateway Public Schools student who meets criteria in 3.2.1.1 or 3.2.1.2); or



- 3.2.1.4 Must have, in addition to meeting the requirements of 3.2.1.1 above, successfully completed at least half of any correspondence course which would affect his/her graduation eligibility if not completed.
    - 3.2.2 The student must be in overall good standing with the school on the date of the graduation ceremony.
    - 3.2.3 The student must have satisfied all outstanding obligations with the school a minimum of five (5) days prior to the graduation ceremony.
    - 3.2.4 A Principal may withdraw or reinstate the privilege to participate.
  4. The Principal shall determine which costs of conducting the graduation ceremony are to be attributed to the school's budget.
  5. The Principal may establish a reasonable graduation ceremony student fee for costs that he/she deems unattributable to the school's budget.
  6. Principals may waive fees for students for whom payment would present hardship.
  7. The Principal shall ensure the local trustee(s), MP, MLA, Mayor(s), Reeve of M.D., Band Chief (Onoway and Valleyview) and School Council Chair are invited and introduced. The Principal shall ensure that reserved seating is provided for these guests.
  8. The Principals shall ensure that if invited guests are expected to speak at the ceremony, they be notified a minimum of six (6) weeks prior to the date of the ceremony.
  9. The Principal shall ensure that the ceremony includes:
    - 9.1 Singing of the national anthem;
    - 9.2 Remarks from the Superintendent;
    - 9.3 Remarks from a local trustee;
    - 9.4 Recognition of the high school's feeder school(s);
    - 9.5 A valedictory address; and
    - 9.6 The presentation of a graduation certificate by the Principal or designate.
  10. The ceremony may include an invocation and guest presentation.
  11. Students will adorn traditional cap and gown with stole for the ceremony. The only exception to this being for beading and/or feather on the graduation cap signifying the culture and understandings of Indigenous students and their families as graduation is celebrated on treaty territory and in recognition of the calls to action in the TRC.
  12. With prior approval of the Superintendent, the Principal may include additional components to the ceremony provided compliance with administrative procedures is maintained.



13. The valedictorian shall be chosen according to the criteria, listed below.
- 13.1 The valedictorian shall be the student demonstrating the highest overall aggregate mark in English 30-1, Social Studies 30-1, and three (3) of the following:
- Mathematics 30-1
  - Mathematics 30-2
  - Mathematics 31
  - Science 30
  - Biology 30
  - Chemistry 30
  - Physics 30
  - A language other than English at the 30 level.
- 13.2 Only regularly programmed courses offered and completed within the school are to be considered when determining valedictorian eligibility. Extenuating circumstances shall be dealt with on an individual basis subject to the approval of the Superintendent.
- 13.3 The aggregate mark shall be determined using the marks indicated on the last reporting period prior to the graduation ceremony, and/or the final blended marks of these same diploma courses previously completed. (e.g. a student's marks of 91, 86, 93, 89 and 85 result in an overall aggregate mark of 444).
- 13.4 In the event of a tie, each of these students shall be offered the opportunity to deliver the valedictory address.
- 13.5 Only those students registered at the school prior to October 31 of the graduating school year shall be considered to be eligible for the honour of valedictorian.
- 13.6 The Principal has the authority to withdraw the honour of valedictorian from any student who demonstrates a less than acceptable ethical, moral or responsible character.
- 13.7 The chosen valedictorian shall be notified, in as much as possible, no later than three (3) weeks prior to the graduation.
14. The Principal shall preview and approve the valedictory address, music, lyrics and other media prior to the ceremony and ensure they are appropriate.





15. Normally, the ceremony shall be completed within ninety (90) minutes, unless the number of eligible participants or other unique circumstances require that this time boundary be extended.

Reference: Sections 20, 60, 61, 113 School Act  
Board Policy 2 Role of the Board  
Board Policy 12 Role of the Superintendent

