



Westsyde Secondary School Grad 2026 Newsletter – April

Important Dates:

January 31	Baby Photo Deadline tparenteau@sd73.bc.ca
April 30	Fees Deadline (all outstanding fees must be settled)
June 17	Commencement Ceremony at Sandman Centre 7:00 pm

Hello again to the caregivers and families of our Westsyde Secondary graduating class of 2026. We want all our grads to **finish strong** and end their final year of public school in a good way! This is an update to the things you need to know regarding grad.

*This information is also posted on the Grad Info Google Classroom **5meo5jer**. All grads have been invited to the site and should turn on notifications to receive updates and be alerted for polls to vote for grad song, valedictorian, teacher ushers, and toasts. Parent emails can be added to receive updates too.*

The **BIG DAY** is Wednesday June 17th! Timeline:

1. **Mandatory Rehearsal for all students** 11:50am. Grads will be called to board buses at the start of lunch (11:21) and travel to Sandman Centre Arena at 11:30am sharp! **Students are NOT permitted to drive themselves.** Students will be dismissed for the day upon return to the school by bus.
2. Staff and Student Grad Banquet 5:00-6:30pm at Sandman Centre's Kia Lounge.
3. Grads prepare for commencement – prep caps, gowns, and stoles, and line up in order at 6:30pm.
4. **Commencement ceremony starts at 7:00pm.**
 - This is **not** a ticketed event. There are no restrictions on the number of seats per student. The whole family is welcome! Open seating for family and friends is in the arena's lower bowl. **The floor is reserved for school staff and grads only.** Arena staff may open the upper level seating if the lower bowl is full. Family and friends should use the main entrance and keep the concourse clear.

Commencement Fee

- Commencement fee is \$125. Please pay using SchoolCash Online, or by cash or cheque at the school's main office. The fee covers:
 - Cap, gown, and stole package (theirs to keep, great for family photos after the ceremony),
 - The costs of putting on the commencement ceremony,
 - And the Banquet dinner.
- All fees are due Thursday, April 30th.

All outstanding school fees (including athletics, library, etc.) must be paid in full to participate in the Commencement Ceremony.

Cap, Gown, & Stole package will be available for pickup mid-May. Fees must be paid. We strongly recommend you hang them up right away and steam or iron to remove wrinkles for the commencement ceremony.

Baby Photo

We have a beloved tradition of showing a slideshow of grads' baby photos during the commencement ceremony. The deadline to submit a photo (infant to pre-school age) to the office was January 31. **If you have not sent in a photo, please do so ASAP.**

- Email a digital photo or scanned photo with the file name: lastname_firstname.jpg) to tparenteau@sd73.bc.ca.
- If you are unable to scan the image, please bring the photo to the main office; we can scan it for you.

Valedictorian and Class Historian

Valedictorian and Class Historian selection will occur this month. Nominees must secure endorsements from 3 teachers who can attest to their academic excellence, leadership, and character. Accepted nominees will have an opportunity to give a speech persuading the grad class to vote for them. More details will be posted to the Google Classroom and announced at school.

Grad Portraits

Grad portraits are now available for purchase if the \$45 sitting fee has been paid. Website: <https://www.rightphotography.com/>

Scholarship Information

Scholarship information can be found on our Google Classroom code 3pbe4gvn. If you do not already have a copy of the Scholarship Guidelines and Information, you can contact Ms. Carlson jucarlson@sd73.bc.ca. In addition, be sure to check out the School District #73 scholarships and bursaries page:

<https://www.sd73.bc.ca/en/community-parents-and-students/scholarships-bursaries.aspx>

Graduation Requirements

The student must be completing all BC Ministry of Education grad requirements must be in good standing by May 31

All outstanding fees must be paid, including the Ceremony fee.

All Library fees must be paid and library books must be returned.

To be eligible to participate in the Commencement Ceremony, a student must be on track to complete provincial graduation requirements by the end of their grade 12 year. At the end of Term 3, there will be an adjudication of any students in grade 12 with failing grades. Administration, in consultation with counselors and teachers, will conduct this process. Failing students will be warned formally as part of this process. Students will have until the last week of April to improve any failing marks. Students who are still failing at the end of April will not be permitted to participate in the Commencement Ceremony. All decisions regarding a student being removed from the list will include parent consultation.

Safe Grad a.k.a. Dry Grad, Grand March, & Prom

The Safe Grad, Grand March, & Prom events are organized by the Parent Safe Grad Committee and not affiliated with the school. Grand March and Prom will be at Colombo Lodge on June 20. The date of other Safe Grad events is to be determined. Please reach out to WSSGRAD2026@gmail.com to get on their mailing list! Also, look for the WSS Grad 2026 Fundraising Auction and the Westsyde Secondary Grad 2026 Facebook pages.

If you have any questions regarding grad, please contact Vice Principal Chris Spanis at the school
250-579-9271 cspanis@sd73.bc.ca