

Check List for Running the Grade 8 Graduation Reception

The reception is for all the graduating students, their families, the teachers, the administration, and the staff. There could be 300-400 people in attendance.

Find out from Parent Council how much has been budgeted for the Grade 8 Grad Ceremony. The funds typically take care of the nut-free cake and some of the decorations.

1. Find out which teachers are planning the graduation ceremony.

- Arrange a meeting with these teachers to see what items you may need to collaborate on. The parents usually take care of everything that happens outside the gym and the teachers take care of everything that happens inside the gym (*with the execution of the next three items).

2. Flowers

- In the past, we have ordered our flowers through a former Hopewell parent named Tanis Browning-Shelp (shelp@magma.ca). You can contact her again, or use another shop. Karen LeRoy, owner of Alta Vista Flowers down the street would also be a great choice.
- We order two large arrangements for the gym (to go on either side of the podium). *Please be sure you tell the teachers you have taken care of this.*
- 1 large arrangement for the table that the graduation cake sits on in the atrium.
- 6 -8 smaller arrangements in bowls for the food tables.

3. Table cloths

- We rented table cloths last year from Ottawa Special Events. These could really be purchased as they are needed every year.
- 2-3 white table cloths are needed for the awards tables in the gym (double check the amount with the teachers)
- 2 white table cloths are needed for the table the graduation cake sits on in the atrium.
- You will need to purchase yellow and purple disposable plastic table clothes for the food and drinks tables (we found some at the dollar store that looked quite nice).

4. Art work for the bulletin boards

- Traditionally, the atrium bulletin boards have been decorated by the younger grades; art work done specifically for the Grade 8's to say good bye.
- Ask the teachers organizing the ceremony whether you have to ask the teachers to plan this, or if they are going to arrange this.

All the other items:

5. Set up in the Atrium

- We place 6 tables out for food (three against the windows and three against the wall with the picture of the tree).
- Two more tables are placed in front of the friendship tree for the graduation cake **this will make more sense when you see the pictures.
- Two more tables are placed down the hall for drinks
- We carefully remove all items from the bulletin boards and place in the parent council room.
- And just like you would for a party, we tidy up the entire area (make sure there are no lost and found clothing items on the floor, etc).

6. Decorations (pictures from previous year below)

- You will be decorating the atrium, the front entrance of the gym, and the hallway beside the office (where the other gym doors are located). All decorations are in the school colours.
- Bess Fraser made a nice "congratulations graduates" sign that we put above the main entrance to the gym. This should be in the parent council room.
- We saved all the decorations we could from last year. They are located in boxes in the parent council room on top of the cupboards in the corner. Feel free to come up with a new vision - but last year, we hung hundreds of yellow stars on ribbons from the ceiling all around the atrium, hung yellow and purple balloons from the branches of the friendships tree, wrapped all the posts in yellow and purple streamers, covered the tables clothes with purple tulle, and created a Photo Booth area against the bulletin board to the right of the main gym doors.
- You will need to buy tape, tacks, and bring scissors.

7. Help from the custodians

- Touch base with the custodian staff a week or so before the event.
- You will need them to take the lunch tables out of the atrium before set up the night before the grad (they set them up in another location in the school).
- You will need them to leave you with 10 tables for food and drinks.
- You will also need them to provide you with ladders to help put up the decorations.
- Garbage cans need to be accessible for the reception.

8. **Food**

- All food is donated by parents. We have needed 30-35 people to donate in the past and could have used more. We asked for things like: cheese and crackers, fruit plates, veggies trays, sweets, dips, and anything else creative that people could think of. All items have to be nut free. Please ask that people bring their food on a nice platter (labeled with their name on the bottom). We left all the trays in the parent council room after the reception for people to pick up.
- Cupcakes or another cake has usually been made available for siblings (so they also get a treat and also don't try to take some of the grad cake). These can also be donated.
- You will need a lot of yellow and purple napkins.

9. **Drinks**

- To avoid congestion, we set up two drink tables in the hall (across from the gym doors in front of the bulletin boards).
- Coffee is served (you will need to arrange a coffee donations. Starbucks has usually done this in the past. If you ask, they will also provide you with cups, napkins. **you will need to add sugar and milk to the list of food items that parents will donate.
- You could also serve lemonade, ice tea etc. We have always had several parents donate nice drink dispensers. You will also need cups.

10. **Graduation cake**

- *** This is for graduating students only so we have had volunteers man this table and cut the cake for the kids*****
- You will need to order a slab cake for 100 people. The cake usually has white icing and is decorated with the school colours. On the cake, you can have the store screen the school logo on it as well as write "congratulations class of 2017" or just the words if they cannot screen the logo on.
- The cake has to be nut free.
- In the past we ordered from a nut free bakery in the west end, Strawberry Blond Bakery but any nut free baker is fine.
- This is a busy time of year for weddings etc so the cake needs to be ordered well in advance.

11. **Parent volunteers**

- Ideally, two parents should lead the planning, but you will need many more to help with other items.

- A team of parents needs to be recruited to decorate the atrium the night before the graduation.
- We have needed 30-35 parents to donate food. We asked people to drop off their contributions to the parent council room/fridge the morning of the event (or the night before).
- Several parents are needed to run the reception and clean up after. Someone should be present from 8:40am on to collect the food donations from parents dropping them off before school.
- Parents are needed to pick up the coffee donation as well as return the coffee containers after the reception.
- A parent will need to pick up the cake.

12. **Student volunteers**

- In years past, we have recruited grade 7 students to help the day of the grad. The jobs they performed included: holding the doors to the gym open and handing out programs to families, working the cake table to cut and hand out cake and make sure other people don't take the cake, picking up garbage etc during the reception, and helping set out the food etc.

13. **Rough time lines:**

- We have usually set up between 6-9pm the night before the graduation.
- The graduation starts at 10am. Have volunteers arrive well before this so they can make sure everything is set up and that the food gets put out.
- Volunteers need to stay until everything is cleaned up (probably until 12pm)





