



NEW WESTMINSTER SECONDARY SCHOOL

835 Eighth Street, New Westminster, B.C. V3M 3S9

Telephone: 604-517-6220

May 20, 2020

UPDATED

Dear Grade 12 parents and students,

Thank you for taking the time to attend today's MS Teams Grade 12 parent and student information session. We really appreciate all the questions and suggestions and we have tried to address them in the Q & A section below.

Questions from students/parents during Grade 12 Graduation Ceremony FAQ MS Teams

1. How are we choosing valedictorian?
**Applications are on the school website; due date May 25th.*
<https://nwss.ca/valedictorian-for-grad-2020-applications-now-open/>
2. Are we able to get grad clothing/hoodies etc?
**Grad hoodies are going to be distributed in the second week of June (TBA)*
3. Are parents allowed to take part in this filming?
**We are exploring the feasibility of that option and will be providing further parent communication by early next week.*
4. Will there be a live stream of the stage walk?
**Once all the students have been filmed and embedded into the virtual ceremony, we will be launching it on our school website – date yet to be determined.*
5. Will there be a grad video made? Digital upload?
**Yes, it will be made available to download on the school website. We are also looking at trying to make digital copies available to all grads.*
6. How are we receiving our yearbooks?
**Yearbooks are typically distributed in the third week of June. Grade 12 students will be given priority for yearbook distribution, and so we'll be trying to coordinate yearbook distribution around the same time as grad hoodie pick-up (TBA).*
7. Will more information be emailed to us after this meeting?
**Yes, stay tuned for further communication.*
8. Can students be able to sign up in groups of 10?
**It will be the students' responsibility to talk and coordinate with each other so that they can sign up for time slots in the same general timeframe. There will be at least 160 time slots available per day, so finding the groupings of time slots*

should not be an issue. Time slots are 3 minutes apart. For instance, it should be relatively easy for a group of 5 students to find 5 time slots in a 15 minute span. Once all the time slots are confirmed, the schedule will be set and the video production will be prepared in the exact order of the confirmed schedule. Any students who miss their scheduled time slot will have their grad photo posted when their name is called out instead.

9. What about the exchange students who have returned home?

**As of now, if a student is unable to walk the stage during those June 2-4 dates, the student's photo will be used in the virtual ceremony instead. Having said that we are continuing to explore other options, and will let you know if anything changes.*

10. Is the Massey Theatre still being used as a homeless shelter and how will this be like with our ceremony taking place?

**The Massey Gym is being used by BC Housing as an Emergency Response Centre (ERC). This area has been boarded off from the other parts of the Massey Theatre building. Students will be entering and exiting the theatre from the eastern doors (off of 8th Avenue). There are also security officers patrolling the ERC and the exterior/parkade area.*

11. What about students who already invested in clothing for dinner dance?

**Grads will have the opportunity to dress up and be photographed in their formal attire at the Massey Theatre. In addition, Dry Grad is exploring opportunities for small groups of grads to get together in order to celebrate this important milestone (where they could also dress up).*

12. Other schools are giving each Grad a scholarship of \$1000 due to no grad events.

**While we have also heard of small (rural) schools giving financial gifts to their small group of graduates (10-20 grads); it is impossible to make that feasible for a school our size. With over 500 grads, that would require a sum of over half a million dollars. In any event, our focus is on creating a meaningful event for our grads (despite the challenges of the current pandemic).*

13. Are we going back to school?

**Voluntary part-time, in person instruction begins on June 1st.*

14. Our son didn't receive a grad survey to complete?

**Every Gr. 12 student email address that is listed in the My Ed portal (approx. 500) were sent a link to the survey two weeks ago. The survey was also communicated on the school website, school Twitter account, and the Grad Committee's Instagram account.*

15. Will there be a fee for grad photos?

**Grads will get one complimentary grad photo print. If grads wish to purchase more, pricing will be made available through Artona.*

16. "I like the idea of a grad parade that is socially distancing" is it possible?

**A grad parade is a major undertaking that we are not prepared to take on at this time. If there was an appetite for a parade-type of event, it would require the approval of the City of New Westminster.*

17. How do we apply to District scholarship?

**Check out the Grad tab on the school website, and select NWSS Local Scholarships and Bursaries.*

<https://nwss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Fillable-District-Authority-Application-Form.docx-1.pdf>

18. When are scholarships coming out?

**Sometime in the second/third week of June (TBA).*

19. Can I come on an alternative date if I cannot make it June 1 -5?

**Unfortunately, we only have the video production booked for June 2-4. These services are in very high demand as schools throughout Greater Vancouver are pursuing their services for their grad ceremonies. We were quick to reserve these dates and ensure that we can film all our grads during those 3 days.*

20. Do we still need to pay grad fees?

**We are asking that grads who have not paid their fees to please do so. We understand that due to financial constraints some families will be unable to pay the fee. In the meantime, there are still substantial costs in producing such a ceremony. Along with the hybrid model ceremony, students will also be receiving other items, including a cap, tassel and gown to keep, an individual photo, a grad composite photo, etc.*

Upcoming dates & information:

May 21–24: Grade 12 students will be able to sign up for their time slot during which they will be filmed crossing the stage in the Massey Theatre. As this is an unconventional ceremony, we will not be alphabetizing students, rather students will be free to sign up for whichever time they wish. **The sign up window begins at noon on Thursday, May 21st and closes on Sunday, May 24th at 9:00 pm.**

<https://nwss.studentappointments.net/admin/>

Instructions:

- Students will need to use their student number to login. For example, this is the number attached to your school email (**3402941**@newwestschools.ca)
- The password for students is their date of birth. For example, if your date of birth is March 24, 2002 – your password is **20020324**.

May 29 & June 1: Grade 12 students will be picking up their keepsake caps, gowns and tassel from the school (location TBA).

June 2 – 4: Grade 12 students will arrive at the Massey Theatre for their scheduled filming and photos. Filming will take place on June 2 (10:00-6:30), June 3 (10:00-7:00), and June 4 (10:00-6:30).

Finally, we know that this event is different from what usually takes place for graduation. However, while we creatively and safely adapt to our current reality, we are excited to be able to capture this special moment for all our graduates in an innovative and timeless manner! We will ensure a high quality, finished product for each Grade 12 student as we try to recognize and highlight the NWSS grad class of 2020.

If you have any questions regarding any of the details of the school leaving ceremony, please contact the Grade 12 Vice Principal, John Lekakis (jlekakis@sd40.bc.ca).

Sincerely,

Mr. M. McLeod
Principal
New Westminster Secondary