

Class of 2026 | Senior Grad Packet

This is a live document that is updated as information becomes available. Please note that there will be changes as dates, places, locations, and information are solidified.

SENIOR CALENDAR

September:

- College Essay Writing
- Senior Retreat
- Homecoming
- HL/SL Selections

October:

- College Essays/Applications completed

November:

- Senior Pictures Due BEFORE Thanksgiving Break
- EE Work Days

December:

January:

- EE Draft Days

February:

March:

April:

- Senior Celebration
- IB Exams

May:

- Prom
- IB Exams
- Graduation
 - Senior Breakfast
 - Graduation Rehearsal
 - Graduation Ceremony
 - Senior All Night Party

SENIOR GOOGLE CLASSROOM AND SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Each year, 11th and 12th-grade counselor Mrs. Ralston creates a Google Classroom for all seniors and their parents. This is a great space for communication of scholarship opportunities, deadlines, and processes that are important throughout one's senior year. If you are not a member yet, we encourage you to join to ensure you receive all the specific information pertaining to seniors that Ms. Ralston has to share.

<https://classroom.google.com/c/NTIzNDYyMjY4NTYx?cjc=dop5opd>

YEARBOOK/SENIOR PHOTOS

All seniors were invited to join a Google Classroom page specifically for the yearbook, where they can submit photos, quotes, wills, etc. Senior photos are due the week of Thanksgiving.

Order your yearbook [here](#).

Each year, City gathers photos for a senior slide show to play at graduation and include in the graduation program. In order to include all scholars, we need help getting pictures. We would like at least two pictures of each senior from their time here at City. Pictures can be added to the [Senior Photo Google Drive](#) or emailed to Assistant Principal Dams, damse@grps.org.

IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME INFORMATION

In order to sit for DP exams, all IB requirements MUST BE COMPLETED for all courses in which students are registered for exams. This also includes CAS requirements. You can help keep your scholar on track to participate in City's graduation ceremony by using the following documents:

[DP ASSESSMENT CALENDAR](#)

[MAY 2026 EXAM SCHEDULE](#)

[DP HANDBOOK 2025-2026](#)

TEXTBOOKS

Seniors will receive a list of checked-out textbooks, novels, library books, and calculators during the second semester, or they may stop in at any time to request one from Ms. Hoving in the Media Center. All checked-out items should be returned as soon as they are no longer needed for a class or to study for an IB exam. Checked out items that have been lost or damaged must be paid for in the form of cash or a check made out to "City High Middle" before graduation and given to Ms. Hoving in the Media Center. The cost per book will be noted on the list of books given to your scholar. If you would like to replace the book via Amazon or www.thriftbooks.com, please have your scholar stop by the Media Center for the ISBN in order to get the proper textbook or novel. Contact Ms. Hoving at 819-1957 or at hovingr@grps.org if you have any questions or concerns.

SENIOR SKIP DAYS

Over the years, there has been a lot of confusion around senior skip days. Skip days are not something that the school helps plan or encourages; however, in some cases, parents and

scholars get the perception that we support these days because not much goes on at the school for seniors when they occur. Unfortunately, when a majority is not in attendance, teachers cannot move forward with their curriculum; this is where some of that confusion stems from. We want all scholars in attendance whenever able, as it allows learning to continue. It should also be noted that senior skip days are not excusable, even with a parent phone call. When a percentage of scholars are out on the same day, the only excusable scenario is an appointment with supporting documentation. We fully understand that skip days may be a right of passage for seniors, but they will have to take them knowing that they are unexcused days. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

SENIOR YARD SIGNS

Families will be notified if senior yard signs will be provided by the district again when that information becomes available.

TRANSCRIPTS

Final transcripts must be ordered by each senior at <https://www.parchment.com/> to be sent to the college/university they are attending next fall. Students can request it now and request it to be “held for grades.”

JOSTENS

Caps, gowns, cards, class rings, and more can now be ordered through Jostens. Orders are due December 1, 2025. The Cap and Gown Unit has all the essentials needed for the ceremony: Cap, Gown, Tassel and IB Stole. You can [Order Here](#). There are also a limited number of pre-owned gowns available through the school. If you are looking to borrow a gown instead of purchasing one, please reach out to Mr. Travis (travisc@grps.org).

VALEDICTORIANS & SALUTATORIANS

The Class of 2026 Valedictorians and Salutatorians will be named once final grades are posted for the fall semester.

SENIOR CELEBRATION - April 29, 2026

In keeping with the tradition of celebrating seniors' accomplishments, hard work, and talents, we are planning to host a Senior Celebration event on April 29, to be held in City's Auditorium. The event will occur from 6-7 PM, with attire being business casual. This is for Senior students and their immediate family. The program will consist of celebrating the Class of 2026 by recognizing students' awards, accomplishments, and talents.

GRADUATION – May 21, 2026

The Graduation Ceremony will take place at Houseman Field, with a back up location that will be announced soon. Graduates will be given a set amount of tickets that will be shared once determined. In the past years, graduates were each given 15 tickets for the ceremony. If the ceremony is moved to indoors, fewer tickets will be designated to each graduate.

In addition to the information included below, more specific details will be provided as the date gets closer, with regard to the venue details including parking, entrances, handicap access, and more.

Graduation Venue: Houseman Field

Address: 162 Houseman Ave NE, Grand Rapids 49503

Parking: Handicap parking is available in the upper parking lot located on Fountain. General parking is available at the lower lot at the corner of Lyon and Houseman. There is overflow parking as well at Innovation Central High School with a shuttle that will run guests directly to Houseman Field every few minutes.

11:00 AM Graduation Rehearsal at Houseman Field (Approximately 2 hours)

- Transportation provided from school. Students will depart from the school by bus, immediately following breakfast, approximately 10:30 AM to Houseman. Students are expected to ride the bus to rehearsal and return to the school, on the bus, after rehearsal.
- Attendance is required for all students who plan to process at the graduation ceremony. Please contact Mr. Travis if you will not be in attendance or have questions or concerns.

Dress Code

Dress, skirt or dress pants: no shorts or miniskirts, no jeans/denim

Dress shoes: no athletic shoes or flip-flops (high heels may be dangerous)

Dress shirt, tie preferred

Long dress pants; no shorts, no jeans/denim

Dress shoes and socks: no flip-flops or athletic shoes

Cap & Gown Requirement - All students are required to have a cap and gown. Appropriate dress attire underneath is necessary. No student will walk at graduation without a cap and gown and appropriate dress attire.

- Cap Decorating – Students may decorate graduation caps. Decorated caps may not obstruct or block the view of others. Caps may not have any lights attached. Use of profane and/or offensive language and/or statements are prohibited.
- Tassels are worn on the right side to start and will be moved to the left side during a special portion of the commencement ceremony when graduation is conferred.

Regalia denotes participation, honors and involvement

- IB Stole - All students wear the stole to denote participation in the IB Programme
- Cords- Various color cords are worn at graduation to recognize student participation in a school affiliated club or organization
- All additions to the graduation regalia must be approved by Mrs. VanderVliet [Current List of Approved Regalia](#)

5:30 PM Students need to be dropped off at City High at 5:30 PM to ride together as a class via bus to Houseman Field at 5:45 PM. Students attending the Senior All Night Party directly following graduation will not be returning to school and will be leaving with the PTSA charter buses directly from Houseman Field to the party location. Students with school parking passes have the option of leaving their cars at City High until they return from the SANP.

6:30 PM Graduation Ceremony Guests Arrive

7:00 PM Commencement Begins

- Tickets – We do not have a precise number, but more info is to come from GRPS on the amount and process for acquiring tickets for any guests that students choose to invite.
- Parking – Parking is available on the north side of Houseman Field. Handicapped parking is located on the south side of the field in the designated lot. For guests that do not have handicapped parking stickers, but have someone that may need a closer entrance, guests can be dropped off in the south lot prior to parking north of the field.
- Programs - Graduation programs will be available in English and Spanish. Graduation programs in additional languages are available upon request prior to the ceremony, please email Mr. Travis (travisc@grps.org).
- Diploma Distribution – For security reasons, graduates will not receive official diplomas during the commencement ceremony. Instead, they will receive a diploma cover. All seniors who are in good standing (meaning textbooks returned, CAS hours and class assignments completed, and outstanding fees paid) may pick up official diplomas in a designated spot, on-site, immediately following the ceremony. All others, please plan to pick up diplomas from the City High Middle School main office upon return of any outstanding items beginning the next business day following commencement.

8:30 PM Graduates begin to gather items for the PTSA Senior All Night Party and headed to area where busses will be waiting! See section below for details. This a PTSA organized event, please contact them accordingly with any questions/concerns. Students attending the SANP will depart directly from Houseman Field and will not be returning to City that evening.

8:30 PM Optional bus transportation returning to City for students not attending the SANP and staff