

HEAD Graduation Commencement Ceremony and Reception

Scope

The scope of this policy covers the annual Christian Family HEAD High School Graduation Commencement Ceremony and Reception, and the responsibility of the graduation coordinator, graduates, and Board of Directors.

Purpose

To set in place guidelines for consistency from year to year in the planning and implementation of the high school graduation commencement ceremony and reception to ensure the best possible, highest quality program and to provide those considering participation the most information possible to aid in making their decision.

Qualification For Graduation

Parents determine the qualifications for their child to graduate. Per Texas law, each home school in the State of Texas is its own private school. Therefore, each student is a graduate of his or her own private school, not a graduate of HEAD. HEAD is not a school – students are neither enrolled in nor graduate from HEAD. HEAD will not provide proof that a student is enrolled in and/or actively attending a home school.

Ceremony and Reception

- A. HEAD will coordinate a graduation commencement ceremony and reception for home schooled high school students, whose families are members of HEAD, provided that a person (or persons) volunteers to act as graduation coordinator and is approved by the Board of Directors.
- B. The graduation commencement ceremony will reflect a Christian student's high calling in Christ and encourage graduates to attain a quality in their adult life that reflects the glory of God, and it will reflect the seriousness of this monumental, solemn occasion.
- C. The graduation ceremony will be a formal event following the tradition of public or private school commencement services, typically lasting 1 to 1.5 hours, depending on the number of graduates, and will follow this general outline.
 - Graduates enter to Pomp & Circumstance
 - Welcome & Prayer
 - Guest Speaker
 - Power Point Presentation
 - Presentation of Diplomas
 - Closing Prayer
 - Graduates Exit
 - Reception
- D. The graduation ceremony is not intended to be personalized for each graduate. When feasible, the ceremony is personalized with graduate photos and parent's comments to the graduates, generally in a Power Point or video presentation. While the ceremony may contain other elements in the form of live or pre-recorded presentations, these elements will be appropriate for the occasion and are not intended to showcase individual talents. An opportunity for more individualized personalization is given through table displays at the reception. Any additional presentations or performances must first be approved by the coordinator before being presented to the graduating class for consideration. The coordinator will determine if the additional presentation of performance is appropriate for the ceremony and if so, will present it to the graduating class for consideration.
- E. Graduation exercises are HEAD activities and will follow activity guidelines including but not limited to:
 - a. The graduation ceremony and reception will be self-supporting and self-funded. They are not a part of HEAD's operating budget.
 - b. HEAD's dress code will be followed and enforced.
 - c. HEAD will handle sign ups and collect money when the coordinator determines it is practical.

- d. Final deadline for participation in the graduation ceremony and reception is the March planning meeting, unless the graduation coordinator waives this date or changes it to an earlier date. After this date, programs are in print, yearbook pages are submitted, etc. and it would not be feasible to add another participant.

Responsibilities of the Graduation Coordinator

- A. The graduation coordinator is a volunteer HEAD member, approved by the Board of Directors, and is a representative of HEAD acting on behalf of the Board of Directors to coordinate a ceremony and reception consistent with the ceremony and reception outlined in these guidelines.
- B. Organize the families of graduates into a planning committee that will come together to make plans for the graduation commencement ceremony and reception. The graduation coordinator will seek input from graduating students and parents. The graduation coordinator has the authority to make the final recommendations to the Board. The committee may approve the enlistment of others for help in the implementation of the ceremony and reception. Any expense incurred for additional help will be divided equally and paid for by the graduates (i.e. camera man, sound crew, setup crew, cleanup crew, servers, etc.)
- C. Interface with the Board of Directors and keep the Board informed of the status of the graduation plans. The Board of Directors will have final approval over matters concerning the graduation ceremony and reception. Should a conflict arise and a consensus cannot be reached, the Board of Directors will make the final decision. It would be beneficial for the Board to have a Board member present at the planning meetings.
- C. Remind participating families that HEAD’s dress code will apply to the graduation ceremony and reception.
- D. Set deadlines based on requirements for ordering or preparing materials associated with the graduation commencement ceremony and reception (i.e. Caps and gowns, photos, Power Point presentation, etc.). Deadlines should include a date by which a person must sign up to participate in the planning of the event and a final date, if not the March planning meeting (see item E.(d) under Ceremony and Reception), by which a person must sign up to participate in the event only, waiving participation in planning. A person who signs up only to participate should be allowed to attend subsequent planning meetings to be informed about the ceremony.
- E. Provide graduates a list of meeting dates, times, and topics for the planning phase of the event.
- F. Provide graduates a list of anticipated expenses and due dates prior to them making a commitment to participate, to assist in their decision making process.

Suggested Timeline:

Fixed Expenses Required for Participation		Payment Due Date
Building Rental	= <current rate> divided by # of graduates	Nov. Mtg.
Cap, Gown, Tassel	= <current rate> per graduate	Nov. Mtg.
Reception	= <estimated cost> divided by # of graduates	May Mtg.
Miscellaneous (Includes programs, tablecloths, paper goods, decorations, sound & lighting crew, janitorial services, photographer and/or videographer, etc.)	= <estimated cost> divided by # of graduates	May Mtg.
Speaker Fees	= <estimated cost> divided by # of graduates	May Mtg.

Actual cost of all expenses should be provided as soon as available or no later than the April graduation planning meeting. Estimates of expenses, not including building rental and cap and gown fees, shall be presented to the planning committee for approval by the April meeting or purchases will not be reimbursed.

Note: # of graduates is per person, not per family.

- G. Suggest other options that graduates have, at their own expense, such as the purchase of photo packages, video of ceremony (if available), diploma, announcements, etc.
- H. Provide a list of company names and addresses where families can obtain diplomas, announcements, etc. Coordinate senior pictures with the Year Book Committee chairperson or Year Book senior representative.
- I. Provide a newsletter article announcing initial meeting time, estimated out of pocket expense to graduate, and coordinator contact information for the September and October newsletter, and updated newsletter articles that would be informative to participating graduates and potential participants.
- J. Provide a report of the graduation commencement ceremony and reception planning and implementation experience (lessons learned) for future reference.

Responsibilities of the Graduate

- A. All graduates are responsible for expenses equal to the total expenses of the graduation and reception divided by the total number of graduates. Payment should be made in full prior to the date of the graduation.
- B. Graduates and their parents should not make purchases for the graduation ceremony and/or reception without first obtaining approval from the planning committee for the purchase and for the amount to be spent on the purchase. Purchases made without the approval of the planning committee will not be reimbursed.
- C. Families of graduates may hold fundraisers to raise money to offset the personal expense of graduation. These fundraisers are a function of each individual home school and not a function of HEAD. Any such fundraiser shall not be advertised as a function of HEAD and shall not be held in conjunction with other HEAD functions.
- D. Conflict resolution: If there is a conflict with the coordinator the graduate or parent is encouraged to do everything possible to work it out with the coordinator. This should be done privately so there can be open communication concerning the conflict. If the issue cannot be resolved, contact the H.E.A.D. Board of Directors for resolution.
- E. Participants in the graduation ceremony and reception are responsible for adhering to the HEAD dress code.
- F. Should a person choose to participate only in the ceremony and/or sign up after the initial deadline, they will be responsible for 1) full payment of their portion of all expenses incurred for the ceremony and reception, equal to the total amount paid by other graduates, 2) any fees such as, but not limited to, late fees or expediting fees that make participation possible, and 3) any preparation necessary to incorporate the graduate into the ceremony without disrupting plans already in place. In other words, a graduate signing up after the deadline for participating in the planning waives participation in planning but agrees to the plans of the committee and agrees to pay amounts equal to the other graduates plus any fees associated with late sign-up. This policy is to allow participation for graduates new to the area, new to HEAD, or newly qualified to graduate without disrupting the plans already in place.

Revised 8/2007