

May 7, 2021

Dear Graduate Class of 2021 and Parents/Guardians,

As we are now approaching the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May, I wanted to provide an update to our 2021 graduates and their families on the plans underway for Grad 2021.

By now you are likely aware that a traditional in-person graduation ceremony is not possible this year due to the [Provincial Health Officer Order on Gatherings and Events](#). The Province has developed graduation planning guidance, and graduation ceremonies for 2021 will be considered a “learning activity”. As with last year, we will invite our graduating students from all of our secondary schools in the North Vancouver School District to the Education Services Centre to be filmed crossing the stage in the Gordon Smith Gallery of Canadian Art. The Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 settings will be followed. We are pleased once again to have contracted *GradsBC* to record and produce a grad ceremony video for families to watch at a later date. Students will also be photographed in their cap and gown, and in their formal outfit after crossing the stage.

You will hear from your school in the next week with more details about Grad 2021, including your school’s filming date(s).

There are some important details for you to note at this time:

1. Students will be scheduled by learning group when possible.
2. Students will be provided with a mask upon arrival.
3. Students are asked to stay home if feeling ill. Students must complete the [Daily Health Check](#) prior to arriving for their filming. **Students who have been directed to self-isolate or quarantine are not permitted to attend the filming.**
4. Parents are asked to drive their students to the filming at their designated time and drop off in front of the Education Services Centre (West side of Lonsdale Avenue, between West 21st and West 22nd). A temporary loading zone will be clearly marked, and students will proceed to the filming entrance to be checked in. Parents can meet their graduates outside, in front of the building, when the filming is finished. Students who need to drive themselves must park in the underground parking lot in the limited designated visitor spots on P1.
5. Students need to arrive camera ready in their cap and gown. A formal photo will be taken after they cross the stage.
6. Families will be provided with a 5x7 copy of the cap and gown photo and formal photo at a later date, and additional copies can be downloaded.
7. Students will leave with their cap and gown, which will be theirs to keep.

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I would also like to take this opportunity to address our Grads directly: I recognize your final year has not been what you had hoped. You have not been able to enjoy many of the usual school-sponsored activities that normally mark your Grad year, and you may be experiencing feelings of frustration or loss. Although you have been attending classes in person, large in-person gatherings have been banned, which means your events that you have been looking forward to have not been able to take place. However, I know your families, school/district staff and community are eager to celebrate you. You are our 2<sup>nd</sup> pandemic grad class, and Grad 2021 is going to be different, but it will also be very special.

Lastly, I cannot stress enough to parents and grads the importance of being extra vigilant in the weeks leading up to the grad filming. Reducing your social contacts and limiting your social interactions to your immediate household will reduce your likelihood of coming into contact with someone with COVID-19. Again, we are not able to accommodate anyone who has been directed to self-isolate or quarantine.

We are committed to hosting you safely at the Education Services Centre so that you can have the opportunity to walk across the stage in your cap and gown. We know this is important and we will make sure you have this moment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Pearmain".

Mark Pearmain  
Superintendent of Schools