Tod Baldwin

Principal



Cynthia Barrera

Dean of Students

Cynthia Langston

Assistant Principal

Katherine Knoche

Dean of Students

Mathew Kane

Assistant Principal

May 1, 2015

Dear DeSoto High Parents/Guardians, and Seniors:

The past four years at DeSoto County High School have gone by quickly and we wish to celebrate this milestone in a dignified and sophisticated manner. The graduation ceremony is a solemn event that marks an important rite of passage in our students’ young lives. It is my pleasure to invite you to attend the graduation ceremony for the Class of 2015. We are proud of their achievements and will honor them as a class and as individuals on Friday, June 5, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at the Turner Agri-Civic Center.

**Senior Obligations:**

In order to be given a cap and gown and be placed in the graduation lineup, all prospective graduates

are required to complete a senior check list to ensure that they have met all requirements to participate in the graduation ceremony.

This checklist will require the following:

 All obligations for textbooks, library books, calculators, clubs, athletics, JROTC, chorus, band,

art etc., shown as “paid” by May 29th, 2015;

 The DCHS Graduation Contract signed by students and parents (attached)

 Appropriate dress for the ceremony;

 A completed Senior Survey indicating the student’s post-high school plans.

 Seniors are encouraged to attend the Senior Awards May 19th, Baccalaureate May 31st. Seniors must be at graduation practice on June 4th and 5th.

 Dress code will apply at all ceremonies; please see graduation details below.

 Graduation, Senior Awards, and Baccalaureate graduate etiquette for guests will be enforced; please see graduation details below.

 Any questions related to upcoming ceremonies should be directed to Lucille LaCava at DeSoto County High School at (863) 494-3434.

## For the most up-to-date graduation information please visit the DeSoto County High School homepage at http://dhs.desotoschools.com/

**To Parents and Relatives:**

On this special day, it is important that parents, grandparents, relatives, and friends share in the experience and recognize the graduates’ accomplishments. All families deserve to hear the names of their graduate announced. For this reason, it is necessary for all guests to hold their applause until all students have had the opportunity to be recognized. Please do not bring air horns or other noise makers to the ceremony. The ceremony is filmed, and excess noise ruins the sound quality of the video. Additionally, those who use noise makers make it difficult or impossible for other families to hear their student’s name announced. Please be courteous so that all graduates are properly acknowledged.

**To Graduating Seniors:**

Every graduating student deserves the same recognition. All families deserve the pleasure of hearing their graduates’ names read in the presence of all attending. Your consideration for all those attending graduation is appreciated.

To maintain a professional and dignified atmosphere, graduating seniors should not be disruptive during the graduation ceremony. Distracting items such as beach balls and balloons take the focus away from the students who are receiving their diplomas. The ceremony, even though it is already a long event, will be stopped whenever beach balls or other items are thrown around. **As this is a student activity, the code of conduct remains in full force. Students whose behavior infringes on the enjoyment of others will be removed from the ceremony and will not receive their diplomas after graduation. The diploma will be held for a minimum of thirty days. After that time period is up, a conference with the student and parent will be required with the Principal before the diploma is conferred.** We hope that these measures will not be necessary and that our graduates will conduct themselves in a manner that will make their families proud.

**Graduation Details:**

* Students who do not attend graduation may pick up diplomas after graduation in the Guidance Office during regular school hours. Please be sure to bring a photo ID with you.
* Employers are more cooperative with releasing students from work to attend graduation practice when given appropriate notice. Please give employers the courtesy of notifying them soon about graduation practice.
* All outstanding obligations must be paid prior to Graduation practice. Please check with indicated staff member for any outstanding obligations.
* Caps and gowns will be provided only after all obligations have been fulfilled.
* Seniors will receive cap and gown on Friday, May 15th. Please hang the gown once you receive it and remember to use caution if ironing the gown.
* As this is a formal occasion, ladies should wear a black dress and black dress shoes. No flowers, corsages, or jewelry can be displayed on the academic gown.
* Gentlemen should wear black/navy dress pants, black/ navy dress shoes (no tennis shoes), a white button down collared dress shirt, and a black/navy tie. Do not wear neck jewelry or facial piercings. Do not wear shorts or jeans.
* During the Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem, and Alma Mater, men will remove their caps (also known as mortarboards) and put them back on at the conclusion of the music.
* Ladies wear their caps throughout the ceremony.
* As seniors enter into the Turner Center, the tassel should be on the student’s right side

 As seniors enter into Turner Center, the tassel should be on the student’s right side.

 The tassel should be shifted to the left after the diploma has been conferred.

 Graduating students may not carry anything with them during the ceremony.

 Any student participating in pranks, alcohol or drug use, or inappropriate behavior, will be immediately escorted from the ceremony and will not be permitted to return. This rule shall apply to the processional and the ceremony.

On May 15, 2015, at 8:00 a.m., a senior class meeting will be held in the gymnasium. Caps and gowns will be distributed only to those seniors who have completed all requirements including no pending obligations and completion of the Senior Exit Survey.

The graduation ceremony will be conducted at the Turner Agri-Civic Center.

On June 5th during graduation practice tickets for admission to the graduation ceremony will be distributed. Attached to this document is a 2015 Graduation Ticket Request Form. This form is required to be returned no later than May 15, 2015 to Mrs. Cendejas-Ramirez at the front office.

I look forward to seeing you on this special day! Respectfully,

Tod Baldwin

Principal

Attachments:

 Senior Checklist

 Ceremony information

 Senior Graduation Contract

 Graduation Ticket Request Form

**PLEASE NOTE:**

It is a policy of the Board of Education to recognize the valedictorian and salutatorian of the graduating class. In addition, students are recognized at the Senior Awards Program, at graduation, and in selected local publications. Class rank, academic honors, and athletic awards may be referenced.

This information will be released without specific permission. If you wish to prohibit the release of any of this information, you may do so by contacting the Guidance Office in writing. Please specifically state what information you would like withheld.

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**Graduation Night**

* Seniors report at 5:30 p.m. to the cafeteria.
* Students are reminded to be prompt. The ceremony will commence at 7:00 p.m.
* When seniors arrive that evening, all parents, relatives, and friends are asked to find their seats and not visit the line-up area.

**Graduation Tickets**

**ADMISSION TO GRADUATION IS BY TICKET ONLY!**

**\*Sorry, but there can be no exceptions.**

* Seniors must return a completed and parent signed 2015 graduation contract in order to request tickets.
* Graduation Ticket Request Forms are due to Mrs. Alma Cendejas- Ramirez no later than

May 15th.

**Itinerary for Thursday, June 4th, 2015 – Graduation Practice 9:00 a.m.**

* By 9:00 a.m., soon-to-be graduates will arrive for the senior graduation practice at DHS.
* Students will board bus to Turner Center for graduation practice.
* Graduation practice
* Photo of members of the Class of 2015 in caps and gowns will be taken.

**Itinerary for Friday, June 5th, 2015 – Graduation Day 8:00 a.m.**

* By 8:00 a.m., soon-to-be graduates will arrive for the senior meeting
* Senior Breakfast
* Graduation practice

DeSoto County High School

2015 Graduation Contract

**I understand that my participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege, not a right. By checking off these items and signing the form, I am indicating that I agree to the following:**

OBLIGATIONS: I understand that all obligations to the school for debts, lost books, etc. must be cleared by May 29th in order to participate in the graduation ceremony. See Cynthia Mizell to pay any outstanding obligations. Checks should be made payable to **DHS**.

GRADUATION PRACTICE: I understand that I must attend graduation practice on Thursday, June 4th and Friday June 5th, 2015 beginning at 8:00 a.m. I am aware that any student not in attendance at practice cannot take part in the ceremony.

GRADUATION ATTIRE: Underneath the graduation gown, I will wear appropriate clothing.

**-Graduating Men:** black/navy dress shoes, black/navy dress pants, white dress shirt, and black/navy tie

**-Graduating Women:** black dress with black dress shoes.

\*Any senior who has a question about appropriate dress should contact Mrs. LaCava. Dress will be checked prior to lineup. Students will not be allowed to have phones, keys or purses/bags with them during the graduation ceremony.

SENIOR CHECKLIST: I understand that I must complete the senior checklist and the Senior Survey.

SUSPENSION: I am aware that any behavior between now and the end of the school year that results in suspension from school may jeopardize my participation in senior activities and graduation.

REMOVAL FROM THE GRADUATION CEREMONY: Families attending graduation deserve to enjoy the graduation ceremony without disruption. I am aware that it is disrespectful to other students and their families to use noise makers, toss balloons around or do anything that disrupts graduation. I understand that if I participate in any disruptive activities, such as tossing balloons around, that I will be removed from the graduation ceremony and not allowed to return. Students who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol fall under reasonable suspicion statutes. Police officers will handle the situation if need be.

Students who participate in pranks, fights or other unacceptable behavior in the last month of school risk being barred from the graduation ceremony.

***Student:*** *I have read and agree to abide by the above guidelines for Graduation 2015.*

**Student Name: (Print Legibly) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student Signature Date \_**

***Parent/Guardian:*** *The above named student has my permission to attend graduation. I have read the information above and understand the requirements for attending graduation, including but not limited to dress code and any attempts to disrupt the graduation ceremony. I understand that participation in graduation is a privilege, not a right, and that students will be removed from the graduation ceremony if their behavior is inappropriate.*

**Parent/Guardian Name: (Print Legibly)**

**Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Guidance Counselor Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*Turn the completed form in to Mrs. Mizell or Mrs. Cendejas-Ramirez by May 15th.*