



Local schools postpone high school graduation ceremonies

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Grade 12 is an exciting and pivotal year for our students, which ends with the ultimate celebration of achievement - graduation! It's a milestone in a young adult's life - the cap and gown, walking across that stage, looking their very best at the graduation formal and celebrating with staff, classmates, family and friends. Our Grade 12 students look forward to their graduation all year and as educators, it gives us such great pride to celebrate this accomplishment together with our students.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are disappointed that graduation ceremonies for high schools in Red Deer Public Schools and Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools will be postponed until further notice. This decision was difficult and is based on the Alberta Government's restrictions on gatherings to comply with social distancing and the goal of limiting the spread of COVID-19.

Graduation ceremonies were originally scheduled as follows:

Red Deer Public Schools

Alternative School Centre (35 graduates)	Friday, June 19 at the Holiday Inn on Gasoline Alley
Gateway Christian School (39 graduates)	Friday, June 26 at New Life Fellowship Church
Hunting Hills High School (346 students)	Friday, May 22 at Westerner Park
Lindsay Thurber Comprehensive High School (400 graduates)	Friday, May 29 at Westerner Park

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools

École Secondaire Notre Dame High School (410 graduates)	Monday, June 29 at Westerner Park
St. Gabriel Learning Centre	Monday, June 29 at Westerner Park





St. Joseph High School (225 graduates)	Monday, June 29 at the school
St. Dominic Catholic School in Rocky Mountain House (38 graduates)	Friday, June 26 at Lou Soppit Community Centre

“We recognize that graduation is an important milestone in a young adult’s life. It’s a milestone that is not only meaningful for our students, but for their families and friends as well,” said Superintendent of Red Deer Public Schools, Stu Henry.

“Graduation is not only a celebration of the hard work and dedication of students, but of the start of the next chapter in their lives. We know our students will move on to do great things, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavours.”

“We will surely miss joining in community to celebrate this strong and successful group of Grade 12 students. We are extremely proud of their accomplishments, spiritually, academically, and emotionally, throughout their entire educational career from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12. We will also miss celebrating alongside the many people that have created a network of support for our graduates as they navigated their educational journey. We look forward with excitement to see how these young adults will impact the world as our future leaders,” said Interim Superintendent of Schools, Kathleen Finnigan at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools.

“We feel disappointment, along with our graduates and their families. We look forward to this milestone with our students each and every year,” said Vice Principal at Hunting Hills High School, Christine Chappell. “We are looking at what we can do to recognize this great achievement by our students, while following guidelines set out by the Alberta Government.”

“We were saddened to learn that we will not be able to celebrate graduation in our traditional way this year. We know that this is a tremendous disappointment to all of our students, families and staff but we also realize that in these unprecedented times we must ensure the safety of everyone. We will now begin looking for creative ways to honour our Grade 12 students’ hard work and accomplishments as they complete their high school experience,” said Principal, Rose McQuay at École Secondaire Notre Dame High School.

“As COVID-19 has taken over our final year of high school, we will be missing out on one of the biggest milestones in our life, graduation,” said Haylee Coutts, Grade 12 student at Lindsay Thurber High School. “As each of us entered Grade 12, we expect senior year to be the best year yet. I have been looking forward to



graduation my whole life, looking forward to feeling proud and successful. Although we know this is out of our control, we are disappointed in the outcome, failing to receive the recognition of our work. Without graduation, we will not have the proper way to say congratulations, goodbye and thank you to our classmates or teachers. Without graduation, there will be a piece of the puzzle missing in our lives.”

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