

Westminster High School

The Class of 2026



Graduation Booklet

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Board of Education of Carroll County does not engage in discrimination that is unlawful or contrary to Maryland State Department of Education guidance on the basis of age, color, genetic information, marital status, mental or physical disability, ancestry or national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The Board of Education of Carroll County is firmly committed to creating equal employment and educational opportunities for all persons by providing an environment that supports optimal academic achievement and productive work and is free from any form of unlawful discrimination, including access to school facilities, educational programs, and extracurricular activities.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Human Resources, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157, (410) 751-3070.

ADA ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or the provision of services, programs or activities. Persons needing auxiliary aids and services for communication should contact the Communications Office at 410-751-3020 or publicinfo@carrollk12.org, or write to Carroll County Public Schools, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, may use Relay or 7-1-1. Please contact the school system at least one (1) week in advance of the date the special accommodation is needed.

Information concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act is available from the Director of Facilities Management, (410) 751-3177, or the Communications Officer, (410) 751-3020, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157.

A.H.E.R.A.

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (A.H.E.R.A.) management plans for all buildings owned or leased by the Board of Education of Carroll County are available for review at the individual Carroll County school locations and at the Office of Plant Operations located at: 191 Schaeffer Avenue, Westminster, MD 21157. Management plans are required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and depict the location, amount, condition, and response action projected for any asbestos-containing materials, if any are located in the school building.



Westminster High School

1225 Washington Road
Westminster, Maryland 21157
Phone: 410-751-3630
Fax: 410-751-3640



● We are Westminster. We are ONE. ●

January 14, 2026

Dear Members of the Class of 2026:

Congratulations on your upcoming graduation from Westminster High School. During the last four years, you have had a variety of experiences that have been designed to prepare you intellectually, socially, and personally for future success in college and in your careers. During these years you have also had experiences that will make you stronger adults and more capable of dealing with life's challenges in the future. I am proud of the way this class came together to build a stronger WHS.

As you enter the homestretch of your high school career and prepare to participate in the planned senior activities, we ask for your cooperation in making these activities memorable and enjoyable experiences for everyone involved.

Please make sure that you are organized. Keep this booklet handy as a reference. It contains reminders, deadlines, dress code requirements, and other useful information for you and your parents. To avoid possible conflicts involving employment or other outside activities, give enough notice to employers and outside coaches so they can plan around your graduation commitments. When an event is listed as mandatory, you must be there. If you have school testing or other school related activities, WHS will be as flexible as we can, but outside obligations will not be excused.

Please conduct yourself in a manner that demonstrates an appreciation for the formality and significance of these final events of your senior year. Your observance of the rules will help ensure that you and your classmates will have a commencement ceremony to look back upon with pride and happy memories. You have all worked very hard to get to this point in your high school careers, and you clearly deserve the best experiences that we can provide.

We would like to personally wish each of you the very best in all your future endeavors. Your contributions to Westminster High School have made it a better place, and your success in post-secondary education, in the military, and in the workforce will reflect your character as well as the quality education you received while you were with us. Best wishes for a productive and rewarding remainder of the school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie M. Nefflen".

Katie Nefflen
Principal

POLICIES AFFECTING SENIORS

The information and events outlined in this booklet are subject to change. All changes will be sent out through e-mail.

In order for seniors to be eligible to participate in graduation exercises, they must complete the Maryland State Graduation Requirements by the end of the fourth marking period of their senior year. Seniors who are required to attend summer school after the date of graduation to meet requirements will not be able to participate in graduation exercises until the following year. Check with your senior to be certain the requirements have been or are scheduled to be met and that course work is being completed satisfactorily.

Student Obligations

All assigned detentions and outstanding financial obligations must be cleared before a senior is permitted to receive graduation tickets. Seniors who have any questions regarding obligations should check with the cafeteria, teacher, coach, media center personnel, or main office, as appropriate.

Student Laptop Collection

CCPS student issued laptops and chargers must be returned to the Media Center between Tuesday, May 19 and Friday, May 22, the last school day for seniors. Seniors must complete all coursework and exams before turning in their laptops. Laptops will not be reissued for seniors to complete coursework. Any senior who must take a make-up exam which requires the use of their laptop may return their laptop on Tuesday, May 26. Students with outstanding laptops or chargers will not be permitted to receive graduation tickets.

Service-Learning Hours

Student service-learning hours must be submitted to Ms. Coale **no later than 2:30 p.m. on Friday, April 10, 2026**, to be eligible to participate in commencement activities and to be considered for meritorious or exemplary service certificates. Students will not receive a diploma until all seventy-five (75) hours have been submitted and verified prior to the first rehearsal.

Yearbooks

Yearbooks ordered by members of the graduating class will be distributed near the end of May at a date and time to be announced. The inclusion of a senior portrait in the senior section of the yearbook is the responsibility of the individual. If the senior's picture does not appear in the senior section, either the student did not have his/her picture taken on the scheduled date or on the make-up day, or the senior did not turn in the proof for processing. Students will be able to come to the school during the summer months to pick up their yearbook supplement.

Final Exams

All seniors must take a final exam or have a culminating activity in each course. The exam will count as 10 percent of the final grade per CCPS grading policies. The exam schedule for seniors is as follows:

5/18 (Mon) - Mod 4B Only

5/19 (Tues) - Mod 1A Only

5/20 (Wed) - Mods 1/1B, 3

5/21 (Thurs)- Mods 2, 4/4A

5/22 (Fri) - Make-up Exams ← ***Last official school day for Seniors, Early Dismissal***

Because attendance at graduation rehearsals is critical, any make-up examinations must be arranged prior to or after graduation rehearsals.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Saturday, May 9, 2026

The Senior Prom will be held at the Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel from 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 28, 2026

Seniors will report directly to the WHS auditorium at 8:00 a.m. for the first graduation rehearsal. Graduation rehearsal will last until 11:00 a.m. **Attendance is mandatory.** Failure to attend graduation rehearsal without prior approval will lead to non-participation in the June 4 graduation ceremony. **Full commencement attire including cap and gown, proper dress, and proper footwear must be worn.** Seniors are required to remain in the area of the auditorium or gymnasium until all rehearsal needs have been met.

The senior panoramic will be taken immediately following rehearsal. Only students in full cap and gown will be photographed.

Friday, May 29, 2026

Seniors will report to the Westminster High School auditorium at 8:00 a.m. for graduation rehearsal. Graduation rehearsal will last until 11:00 a.m. **Attendance is mandatory.** Failure to attend graduation rehearsal without prior approval will lead to non-participation in the June 4 graduation ceremony.

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

Seniors will report to the Westminster High School gymnasium by 8:30 a.m. for the Senior Farewell Assembly. The Farewell Assembly will begin at 9:00 a.m. **Attendance is mandatory.** Graduates are required to be in full commencement attire. Parents may attend the Farewell Assembly.

Graduation tickets will be distributed at the conclusion of the Farewell Assembly. CCPS student issued laptops and chargers must be returned and student obligations must be cleared before students will receive tickets.

The Senior Picnic, hosted by the Class of 2026 Parent Boosters, will follow the Farewell Assembly. More information to come.

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

The Senior Community Awards Ceremony begins at 6:30 p.m. Only those students who have been notified that they are receiving an award are required to attend and should be at the school by 6:15 p.m. Attending graduates are required to be in business casual attire. Parents may attend the Community Awards Ceremony.

Thursday, June 4, 2026

Students will report to Big Baker Chapel at McDaniel College at 7:30 a.m. for graduation rehearsal. Graduation rehearsal will last until 11:00 a.m. It is recommended that seniors wear their graduation shoes in order to practice navigating the steps and stage. **Graduation rehearsal is mandatory.** Failure to attend graduation rehearsal without prior approval will lead to non-participation in the June 4 graduation ceremony.

Thursday, June 4, 2026

Students should report to Baker Chapel at McDaniel College at 12:00 p.m. for the graduation. Graduation begins at 1:00 p.m. in Gill Center at McDaniel College.

GRADUATION INFORMATION:

Tickets for Graduation

Admission to graduation is **by ticket only**. The number of tickets each senior will receive for graduation is **six (6)**, which is based upon the capacity allowed at McDaniel College at the time of graduation. Tickets will be distributed to seniors following the Farewell Assembly, Tuesday, June 2. We will not be able to honor replacement ticket requests or allow entry for “forgotten or lost” tickets. It is important that you keep your tickets in a secure location and remember to bring them to the graduation ceremony. Every family member must have a ticket to gain admission. If you need additional tickets, ask another senior who may not use all of theirs. If seniors are unable to obtain extra tickets from classmates, they should submit a request for additional tickets; see the end of this booklet for the request form and instructions.

Special Seating

There will be reserved areas for handicapped, deaf and hard of hearing guests as well as guests requiring language services. Seats in this section will be counted in your allotment of tickets. This section will require a reserve seating ticket. See the end of this booklet for the request form and instructions.

Seating at Graduation

Seating for graduation at McDaniel College is on a first-come, first-served basis. No seats may be reserved. Doors to Gill Center will open at **12:00 p.m.** for guests holding a ticket for admission. Please ask that your friends and family members attending the graduation ceremony be physically in their seats by **12:50 p.m.** to avoid interference with the faculty and student processional into the ceremony. All doors to Gill Center will be locked at **12:50 p.m.** to allow the graduates to process. Doors will re-open once the processional is finished. No one will be admitted entry or re-entry during the processional – this includes guests who may have left their seats to use the restroom.

Graduation Rehearsals

To ensure a smooth graduation on Thursday, June 4, every senior participating in graduation is required to attend all rehearsals. Seniors who participate in a work release program are also required to be present at rehearsals. Inform your employers of these obligations early to avoid unnecessary conflicts. **Failure to attend graduation rehearsals without prior approval will lead to non-participation in the June 4th graduation ceremony.**

On each mandatory day, seniors are required to report at the specified time. Please remember that school may be in session for the remainder of the student body. Seniors are to remain in designated rehearsal areas and only those seniors who have justifiable business are permitted in classroom areas. No senior may return as a visitor while school is in session.

Rules of conduct, processional and recession order, seating, and school policies regarding seniors and graduation will be explained at rehearsal. Senior questions will also be answered during the rehearsal session.

Dress Code

All seniors must have a WHS cap and gown in order to participate in the graduation ceremony. Since these activities are voluntary for the graduate, and because we respect our graduates, their families, and invited guests, seniors inappropriately dressed will be removed from the lineup prior to these events and will not be allowed to participate in a formal capacity.

Caps and Gowns Ordering Information

Students will order caps and gowns from Josten's Website, using the QR code provided below, *no later than Wednesday, April 1, 2026*. All caps and gowns will be distributed to students at the Senior House Meeting on Wednesday, May 20th, during Advisory.



*Please note that if you are not scheduled to be in the building during this time, you will need to come to the Counseling Office between Thursday, May 21st and Tuesday, May 26th to pick up your cap and gown. You CANNOT pick up your cap and gown package on the day of the first graduation rehearsal.

Appropriate Dress to Wear under Caps and Gowns

Students may choose from the following options:

- A dress that doesn't fall below the graduation gown or a blouse and skirt
- Dark tie (no bow ties) with white buttoned-down dress shirt
- Black dress slacks (no tan or khaki-colored trousers)
- **Black** dress shoes, boots, or sandals (no dressy flip-flops are permitted)
- Dark socks with shoes/boots

Also:

- Jewelry is permissible as long as it is not worn on the gown itself
- Any cords, stoles, medals, and/or pins worn with your graduation gown must be approved by CCPS. Please see administration if you have any questions or concerns.

*Rather than spend a significant amount of money on the appropriate graduation attire, please consider other means to find the items you may need. Older relatives, friends, and neighbors are good sources for some of these items, especially dress shoes.

The gown cannot be ironed because it will melt. It should, however, be removed from the bag and allowed to hang loosely prior to the first rehearsal to release any wrinkles or fold lines.

The cap should be placed upon the head with the longer point of the crown to the back. The shorter point should be centered on the forehead down far enough so that the top is level and parallel to the floor. The tassel is draped over the left temple. Tassels should not be pinned or sewn but should be permitted to hang naturally.

The changing of the tassel from the right to the left side is an action practiced in many schools. It is intended to give the graduate a feeling of personal significance and to mark graduation. The changing of the tassel will be led by the president of the class after all participating seniors have received their diploma covers.

Distribution of Diplomas

The distribution of diplomas will conform to the procedure used in all Carroll County high schools. Blank diploma covers will be presented to the graduates at the ceremony. Actual diplomas will be distributed immediately following the graduation ceremony to all seniors who participated in graduation. We recommend that students designate a meeting place to reunite with family after receiving their diploma envelope. Diplomas will be available to students who did not participate in graduation on Friday, June 5 at 9:00 a.m. in the Westminster High School Counseling office.

Graduation Photos

Photographers from the school's photography vendor, Legacy Studios, will be capturing candid photos and graduation portraits during graduation. Any student photographed during the commencement ceremony will be uploaded to an online photo gallery for viewing and purchasing shortly after graduation day. Images can be accessed by going to events.legacystudios.com. Once on the website, please select the Westminster High School - Graduation option. Please use the QR code provided below to view your images on the website and use password 466826. All ordered graduation prints will be delivered directly to the graduate's home, not returned to the school. For assistance with questions or ordering, please contact Legacy Studios directly at customer@legacystudios.com or 716.512.6336. Please do not contact the school.



Announcements and Name Cards

Announcements and cards will be mailed directly to those who ordered from Jostens. Receipt of a graduation announcement **does not** ensure a ticket to the graduation ceremony. Admission to the graduation ceremony is *by ticket only*. Each person you intend to invite to graduation must be given an admission ticket; announcements are *not* tickets.

Announcement of Names

Every parent, guardian, family member, and guest want to hear his or her graduating senior's name announced during the ceremony. Unlike a recreational or sporting event, where yelling and shouting are encouraged and permitted, the commencement ceremony should have an aspect of regality and formality. In order to permit each family to hear their senior's name called, we are asking that during the reading of names all applause and other celebratory sounds are held until the end. Also, by doing so, the length of the ceremony will be shortened.

Rules of Conduct

Rules of conduct, professional and recessional order, seating, and school policies will be enforced at all times. Any student who violates any of these conditions will forfeit their privilege of obtaining their diploma during the ceremony.

Unanswered Questions

If you have any questions or concerns regarding graduation activities, please call or e-mail Mrs. Brynes or Mrs. Dudley, graduation coordinators, at 410-751-3630 or erbryne@carrollk12.org or tjdudle@carrollk12.org.

Westminster High School Commencement - Additional Ticket & Special Needs Seating Application

Due on or before Friday, May 1, 2026, to Mrs. Seeley in the Attendance Office

Request for Additional Tickets

The amount of graduation tickets each senior will receive is **6 tickets**. Seniors and their parents who request extra tickets (and cannot get enough by asking their peers) should submit this request form to Ms. Seeley, in the Attendance Office, by Friday, May 1, 2026. Due to limited seating, however, all requests may not be met; you will be notified by May 15 *only* if we are not able to accommodate your requests.

Due to the restrictions placed upon McDaniel College by the Maryland State Fire Marshal, we will not be able to honor extra ticket requests that are received after the request deadline of May 1, 2026.

Student's Name: _____ Advisory Teacher: _____

Number of additional tickets requested: _____ (not including the tickets that each senior is guaranteed)

Reason additional tickets are required (Please limit your explanation to 2-3 sentences):

Special Needs Seating

There is a "Special Needs Seating" area reserved for family members who may be wheelchair bound or who are having mobility issues. Should you have a family member who needs this special seating, please submit this request form to Ms. Seeley, in the Attendance Office, by May 1, 2026. You will be notified by May 15 *only* if we are not able to accommodate your requests.

Due to the restrictions placed upon McDaniel College by the Maryland State Fire Marshal, we will not be able to honor requests for special needs seating that are received after the May 1, 2026 deadline.

Please note: Only one additional family member is permitted to sit with the family member with special needs. Each person seated in this section must present a ticket for admission to the graduation ceremony. These tickets will be issued to the graduate in place of regular graduation tickets, not in addition to them.

Student's Name: _____ Advisory Teacher: _____

Number of special needs seats requested: _____

Do you wish to have 1 (one)* additional family member sit in this area? _____

*Your regular admission ticket total will be reduced by these Wheelchair- Accessible Tickets. Graduates will still receive only the allotted tickets, *including these*.

*Wheelchair-Accessible drop off and parking is located at the back of the Gill Center. McDaniel Parking Attendants will help guide you there the day of the event.

Hard of Hearing, Deaf Guests and Language Services

Should you have a family member who needs interpretive services, please submit this request form to Ms. Seeley, in the Attendance Office, by May 1, 2026. You will be notified by May 15 *only* if we are not able to accommodate your requests.

Please note: Only one additional family member is permitted to sit with the family member who needs interpretive services. Each person seated in this section must present a ticket for admission to the graduation ceremony. These tickets will be issued to the graduate in place of regular graduation tickets, not in addition to them.

Student's Name: _____ Advisory Teacher: _____

Number of interpretive service seats requested: _____ Type of service (ASL., Spanish, etc.) _____

Do you wish to have 1 (one)* additional family member sit in this area?

*Your regular admission ticket total will be reduced by these Hearing-Impaired Tickets. Graduates will still receive only the allotted tickets, *including these*.

Westminster High School Commencement Application – Digital Version (Preferred!)

Westminster High School Class of 2026 Commencement Application



Westminster High School Commencement Application – Paper Version

Due on or before Friday, January 30, 2026, to Mrs. Krom in the Main Office

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____ M.I.: _____

1. _____ I plan to participate in the Commencement Ceremony.
- _____ I will be buying a cap and gown from Jostens
- _____ I will be borrowing a cap and gown from a previous WHS graduate and do not need to purchase one; I understand that I will still need to buy a 2026 tassel.
2. _____ I do not plan on participating in the Commencement Ceremony. I will pick up my diploma at WHS on Friday June 5 at 9:00 AM.

If you checked #1 – please read the following, sign below and return the application by January 30, 2026.

If you checked #2 – please sign below and return the application by January 30, 2026.

- Read carefully the following information and requirements -

The parent/guardian and student signed below agree that:

1. The student shall attend all of the following mandatory events:
 - Commencement Rehearsal - WHS Auditorium 8:00 AM, Thursday, May 28
 - Commencement Rehearsal - WHS Auditorium 8:00 AM, Friday, May 29
 - WHS Senior Farewell Assembly – WHS Gymnasium 8:30 AM, Tuesday, June 2
 - WHS Community Awards – WHS Auditorium 6:30 PM, Wednesday, June 3
 - o This event is only mandatory for seniors who are receiving an award
 - Commencement Rehearsal – Baker Chapel, McDaniel College, 7:30 AM, Thursday, June 4
 - Commencement - Gill Center, McDaniel College, 1:00 PM, June 4
 - o Report to Big Baker Chapel at McDaniel College by 12:00 PM – SHARP!!!!
2. The student will arrive on time for each event. During each event, attendance will be taken at the beginning. Following attendance check-in, those students who are not present either because they are tardy or absent may lose their privilege to graduate on stage at McDaniel College. These students may pick up their diploma at WHS on Friday, June 5 at 9:00 AM.
3. Proper attire is required for rehearsals, the Farewell Assembly, Community Awards Ceremony and Commencement: Refer to Graduation Booklet for details.
4. Students will be responsible for providing their own transportation to McDaniel College for both the rehearsal and commencement ceremony. Students are also responsible for providing their own transportation at the conclusion of all rehearsals at WHS.
6. All financial and detention obligations must be satisfied in order to receive graduation tickets. The CCPS student issued laptop and charger must be returned to the WHS Media Center in order to receive graduation tickets.
7. Proper behavior is required at all times. Students must remain in the assigned rehearsal areas at all times. Improper behavior will result in immediate dismissal from commencement.

By signing below both the student and the parent/guardian agree to the above conditions and the information in the booklet.

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent: _____ Date: _____