



Rockford High School - IB World School

International Baccalaureate Magnet - Middle Years, Diploma, and Career Programs

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

Congratulations on your graduating senior! **Thank you** for your trust and partnership with Rockford Area Schools in the educational journey of your student.

High School Commencement is a ceremony which comes only once in a person's lifetime. This year's commencement ceremony will be an indoor ceremony **on Friday, May 29, 2026 at 5:00 pm**. Our seating area guarantees enough chairs for graduates to invite up to eight guests. We look forward to making this momentous ceremony an experience that is meaningful for all of the graduates of Rockford High School. With our cooperative efforts to ensure timeliness, decorum, and positivity, Rockford Area Schools and the surrounding community will provide a capstone experience that will be remembered fondly by the Class of 2026 and their families for years to come.

Included below are end-of-the-school year points of information for you and your graduating senior:

FINAL WEEKS OF SCHOOL AND CLEARANCE DETAILS FOR SENIORS

Senior Awards & Scholarships Ceremony – Seniors receiving an award and/or scholarship will be invited to attend this ceremony on Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 7:00pm in the auditorium.

Graduation Attire – Cap, gown, and tassel are provided free of charge for seniors *participating* in the 2026 RHS commencement ceremony and are theirs to keep. They will be distributed to eligible seniors at senior check out during lunches on May 12th.

Please note gowns are packaged and will need to be ironed prior to the ceremony. When you or your student receives their cap & gown, please try it on right away. If there are any concerns about the fit, please see Olivia in the front office.

Gold honors cords, red white and blue service cords, white NHS stoles, and IB medallions are provided for the ceremony to eligible students. These are the only approved additions or alterations allowed in the ceremony.

Academic/Activity Fees – All activities and classroom books/academic fees must be paid in full by Tuesday, May 12, 2026. Please check your [Parent Portal](#) for outstanding fee balances, if applicable.

Fines/Fees/ Lunch Fees – All fines and fees must be paid before students are cleared to pick up their cap and gown. This includes lunch account fees.

If unpaid by graduation day, the amount will be sent to our collection agency. Seniors may check with Angel Swanson in the front office or check the Campus Portal. Outstanding sports and activity fees for the 25-26 school year have been added to your student's account in Infinite Campus and will also be due prior to senior checkout.

Commencement Participation Fee – The commencement participation fee is \$40, which covers costs associated with the ceremony. This can be paid by using the [Parent Portal](#) or by check payable to Rockford Area Schools and turned into the RHS front office. Payment is due by May 12th. Attendance at the commencement ceremony is not required, but once you decide to attend by paying the fee, the dress code and participant behavior will be enforced.

Final Week of Class for Seniors, Week of May 25th

- Wednesday, May 27th: Finals for 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th
- Thursday, May 28th: Finals for 2nd, 4th, 6th
- Friday, May 29th: Graduation commencement rehearsal, 10:00am (details below).
- Friday, May 29th- Graduation Ceremony, 5:00 p.m.

Mandatory Commencement Ceremony Rehearsal – All seniors participating in the ceremony MUST attend rehearsal which begins promptly at 10:00 am on Friday, May 29th in the RCC Field House.

Seniors are to bring their cap and gown to school for rehearsal. Please be on time.

All seniors are to report directly to the Rockford Community Center. Following rehearsal, RHS grads will once again participate in a “senior salute” as they parade in cap and gown through an eager crowd of students inside REAMS.

Other announcements and information relative to commencement will be made at the rehearsal.

Tickets – Each student will receive 8 paper tickets. Tickets will be issued to students at the graduation rehearsal. Every guest must have a paper ticket to enter the graduation ceremony. Ticket takers will not have access to a list of names of attendees, so the ticket is required to be admitted to the ceremony.

If you are unable to attend, or if you have extra guests that you are unable to secure tickets for, the graduation ceremony will be live streamed and an overflow viewing area will be available in the RCC meeting room

GRADUATION COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY DETAILS

Line-up for Commencement – Seniors need to report to the RCC by 4:30 pm on Friday, May 29th to line up for commencement. *Use the Game Entrance Door 13.* Students driving separately from their families should park in the high school staff lot near Door 1.

Commencement Dress Code Guidelines – Students must dress appropriately for this formal occasion.

- MEN - Dress shirt with collar (tie recommended), dark dress slacks, dark socks, dark shoes.
- WOMEN - Blouse with skirt, or slacks, or dress, shoes.
- Do not wear flip flops and refrain from excessive high heels.
- Wear your mortarboard (cap) on with the point almost between your eyebrows. The square board should be straight and level. Students should not decorate their cap and may be asked to wear a plain cap during the ceremony if needed.
- **REMINDER:** Gold honors cords, red white and blue service cords, white NHS stoles, and IB medallions are provided for the ceremony to eligible students. These are the only approved additions or alterations allowed in the ceremony.

Ceremony – Parking will become available at 4:15 p.m. and it is first come first serve. **Doors will not open until 4:30 p.m.** Families should park in the student parking lot or RCC lot.

Limited handicapped parking is available in the RCC lot. Overflow parking is available in the upper lot.

Behavior – Participant and audience behavior is expected to be exemplary as this is a momentous event.

Please recognize the importance of this experience for family members and friends. Any actions that detract from others' enjoyment of the commencement ceremony will cause unneeded delays during the program.

Although it has not been a problem at RHS, parents and students are reminded that any student who is, or appears to be, under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be allowed to attend or participate in the commencement ceremony.

Photos – Photos of the ceremony will be taken by staff members. Following graduation families will be granted access to the complete set of images.

Families are invited to gather outside of the RCC to take photos immediately after the ceremony. The RCC will be closed after the ceremony.

Diplomas – All diplomas will be distributed on Monday, June 1st or Tuesday, June 2nd from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. in the RHS main office if credits are completed. All students (regardless if you participate in the ceremony) must pick up their diploma on these dates. Students are required to return any gold honor cords and white NHS stoles prior to receiving their diploma.

All Night Grad 2026

When: May 29, 2026 - Bus departs RHS at 7:30pm, with All Night Grad check in from 7:00-7:15pm outside of the Commons

Return time 2:45am on May 30th

There will be a time to take pictures with your family

Where: Two different venues with plenty of food and activities

Cost: \$26 per person

Includes: Transportation to and from venues
Dinner, Dessert, Beverages, Prizes



for any questions, please contact Jessica Lappe at 763-203-4925 or jessica.lappe@yahoo.com

Registration is due by Thursday, May 7, 2026.

Questions regarding the All Night Grad Party?

Please email the All Night Grad Party Committee Chair: Jessica Lappe

(This is not an ISD 883 sponsored event.)

Seniors, we seek your cooperation to ensure an enjoyable time for the remainder of the school year. We commend you for your leadership and for all your efforts at RHS. BEST WISHES!

Respectfully,

Paul Menard
RHS Principal