



IRVING ISD

GRADUATION
TOOLKIT

2026

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#IrvingISDGrads

LETTER FROM SUPERINTENDENT MAGDA A. HERNÁNDEZ

Dear Parents and Students of the Class of 2026,

We are proud to once again celebrate graduation right here in our own backyard at Joy and Ralph Ellis Stadium. Hosting this milestone event in our community allows families, classmates and friends to come together in a meaningful way to honor and celebrate all that you have achieved, close to home.

This year, we are especially excited to host a dedicated celebration for Cardwell Career Preparatory Center graduates, who will hold their commencement ceremony at Nimitz High School. This marks a meaningful opportunity to honor Cardwell students in a more personal setting that reflects the unique spirit of their school community.

In this graduation toolkit, you will find important information to help ensure a smooth and successful ceremony, including ticket distribution, parking details, house rules and procedures for graduates and guests. This toolkit is also available on our graduation website at IrvingISD.net/Graduation.

Graduation is the culmination of years of hard work, perseverance and growth. It reflects not only your accomplishments, but also the love and support of your families and the dedication of the educators who have guided you along the way. I am incredibly proud of each of you.

As I prepare to conclude my time as superintendent later this year, this graduation season is especially meaningful to me, and I am grateful to celebrate this milestone with the Class of 2026 and your families.

Congratulations, Class of 2026. I look forward to celebrating with you soon. I will see you at Ellis Stadium and at Nimitz High School!

Sincerely,



Magda A. Hernández
Superintendent of Schools



GRADUATION CEREMONY DATES AND TIMES

- Irving High School | Friday, May 29, at 8 PM at Ellis Stadium
- Nimitz High School | Saturday, May 30, at 8 PM at Ellis Stadium
- Cardwell Career Preparatory Center | Sunday, May 31, at 5 PM at Nimitz High School
- Singley Academy | Sunday, May 31, at 8 PM at Ellis Stadium
- MacArthur High School | Monday, June 1, at 8 PM at Ellis Stadium

GATES WILL OPEN FOR GUESTS AT 6:15 PM BEFORE EACH CEREMONY AT ELLIS STADIUM.

DOORS WILL OPEN FOR GUESTS AT 4:15 PM AT NIMITZ HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE CARDWELL GRADUATION.



HOUSE RULES

Tailgating is **not permitted**.

Concession stands will not be open, but bottled water will be available for purchase (\$1 each), benefiting the junior class. Please note, only water will be available for purchase - no other concessions.

APPROVED ITEMS AT ELLIS STADIUM AND NIMITZ HIGH SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- Diaper bag when accompanied by infant/young child
- Camera bags
- Small clutch purse (No larger than 6.5" x 4.5")
- Medical Bag with medical supplies
- Clear Tote - Plastic, vinyl or PVC (No larger than 12" x 6" x 12")
- Flowers
- Signs smaller than a standard poster board 24" x 36"
- Gift Bags

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE PROHIBITED AT ELLIS STADIUM AND NIMITZ HIGH SCHOOL:

- All purses, bags or containers larger than a small clutch bag
- Backpacks
- Briefcases
- Drawstring bags
- Outside food or drinks, including bottled water
- Coolers/Tumbler/Travel Mug
- Air horns
- Glitter/Confetti/Poppers
- Balloons
- Umbrellas, unless there is inclement weather
- Signs larger than a standard poster board 24" x 36"
- Strollers

All carried items and entrants are subject to search. Prohibited items must be returned to the owner's car or discarded. Any prohibited items are subject to confiscation, and the person in possession of such item is subject to arrest. Items left at the gate will be discarded.

GRADUATION REHEARSAL INFORMATION

Each high school will host a mandatory graduation practice with the Class of 2026 to review graduation ceremony procedures including arrival times, ceremony sequence, seating and safety measures, as well as tickets, diploma and program distribution. Your high school will contact you with a date and time for this mandatory practice.

GUEST AND TICKET INFORMATION

TICKETS

Each graduate from Irving, Nimitz and MacArthur High Schools will receive 19 tickets for guests.

Singley Academy graduates will receive 20 tickets for guests.

Gates open at 6:15 PM. All guests attending the graduation ceremony will go through a security screening, including bag checks. Guests/families must enter the stadium at the NORTH entrance.

All guests must present a ticket to enter the graduation ceremony. * Tickets may be shown electronically (on a phone or device) or as printed copies provided by the graduate. Children age 2 and under do not need a ticket if they will sit on a lap and not occupy a seat. If a child age 2 or under will occupy a seat, a ticket is required.

Each ticket is unique and can only be scanned once at the gate and cannot be used for re-entry once a guest has exited.

The stadium capacity seats roughly 11,000 and seating will be on a first come, first serve basis on arrival. Both the home and visitors' sides will be open to guests, we suggest communicating with your guests on the side closest to your seat. *

*** Guests for Cardwell Career Preparatory Center graduates are not limited. The information above is not applicable to the Cardwell graduation.**

PARKING

Parking is free at the stadium and Nimitz High School. Carpooling is highly encouraged. Entrances and lots will be manned by security personnel before and after the ceremonies to ensure a smooth experience.

For stadium graduations, overflow parking will be available at Nimitz High School, located at 100 W. Oakdale Road, Irving, TX 75060. Shuttle service will begin at 6 PM and will run until 10:30 PM to ensure all guests are transported safely and efficiently.



DAY-OF PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATES

Ellis Stadium Graduates - Irving, Nimitz, Singley, MacArthur

All graduates are required to check in at Bowie Middle School by 5:30 PM on the date of their graduation ceremony. Parents will park, and students will walk to the Competition Gym, entering through Door #15. Upon entry, students will go through metal detectors and proceed directly into the Competition Gym.



Cardwell Graduates

All graduates are required to check in at Nimitz High School (in the black box theatre) by 4 PM on their graduation date, Sunday, May 31.

All graduates should arrive in their graduation cap and gown prior to check-in and should plan to keep all essential items in their pockets and keep their hands free. Small, non bulky cross body bags are admissible for essentials that won't fit in pockets (phone, keys, wallet, lipstick, etc.)

Graduate Dress Code

- **DO NOT** decorate graduation caps
- **DO NOT** wear pointed heels, crocs, flip flops
- **DO NOT** wear sweat pants
- **DO** wear dress shoes, flats, wedges, chunky heels or espadrilles
- **DO** wear business attire (Collared shirt, button down, slacks, khakis, dress, skirt)

CEREMONY AND PHOTOS

Ellis Stadium Graduation Ceremonies

Processional

At the start of the ceremony, students will participate in a processional walk from the staging area at Bowie Middle School to the north entrance of Joy and Ralph Ellis Stadium. Led by the Principal and Associate Principal, students will process down the center aisle in two lines and fill each row. The processional will begin at 7:50 PM to ensure the program begins promptly at 8 PM.

Stage

Graduates will be led by a line leader who will be holding a name card for each graduate. Students will approach the stage row by row and walk from their seat to the stage. After having their name called, they will receive his/her diploma from a board member and have a professional photo taken with Superintendent Hernández on stage.

Then, they will exit on the opposite end and take a second photo with their campus backdrop behind the stage. There, a second professional photographer will take one official photo only. Students will then return to their seats. The photos will be posted at IrvingISD.net/PhotoGallery a week after graduation.

Dismissal & Recessional

At the end of the ceremony, graduates will participate in a recessional and exit through the North side track entrance. Families will exit through the North entrance. Congregating after the ceremony is permitted after the graduation ceremony in the mezzanine area.

Cardwell Graduation Ceremony at Nimitz High School

Processional

At the start of the ceremony, students will participate in a processional walk from the staging area into the auditorium. Led by the Principal and Assistant Principal, students will process down the center aisle and fill the designated rows. The processional will begin at 4:55 PM to ensure the program begins promptly at 5 PM.

Stage

Graduates will be led by a line leader who will be holding a name card for each graduate. Students will approach the stage row by row and walk from their seat to the stage. After having their name called, they will receive his/her diploma from a board member and have a professional photo taken with Superintendent Hernández on stage.

Then, they will exit on the opposite end and take a second photo with their campus backdrop outside the auditorium. There, a second professional photographer will take one official photo only. Students will then return to their seats. The photos will be posted at IrvingISD.net/PhotoGallery a week after graduation.

Dismissal & Recessional

At the end of the ceremony, graduates will participate in a recessional and exit through the main entrance. We ask that families wait to exit until every graduate has exited the auditorium.

COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMS

To ensure there are programs available for each graduate's guests, 2 program vouchers will be given to each graduate. Vouchers will be distributed at each home campus during their Senior Meeting/Graduation Rehearsal day.

Guests may exchange the voucher for a commemorative program at the entrance of both the HOME and AWAY sides at Ellis Stadium and at the auditorium entrance at Nimitz for the Cardwell graduation.

Students will also receive a separate commemorative program with their diplomas.

A digital copy of the program will be available on the graduation website (IrvingISD.net/Graduation) for you to download to your phones ahead of the ceremony.

LIVESTREAM

The four graduation ceremonies at Ellis Stadium will be livestreamed. Links to the livestream for each graduation can be found at IrvingISD.net/Graduation.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PLAN

In the event of inclement weather, graduation ceremonies may be postponed to the designated makeup dates of June 2 or June 3. A decision regarding any schedule changes will be made by 12 PM on the day of the scheduled graduation ceremony. Families of seniors will be notified through School Messenger phone call, email and text as well as on social media (X, Facebook, Facebook Español) and the district website.

[IRVINGISD.NET/GRADUATION](https://www.IrvingISD.net/graduation)



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