

Carlisle Public Schools Graduation Co-Chairpersons Subcommittee Guide

Some things to keep in mind as you begin this process. On the surface this seems like another big event like the Spaghetti Supper or the 7th Grade Play. But this event is different in ways that you may not expect. This can be a very emotional event. Which means that you may encounter heightened emotions from your committee members, as well as parents and guardians throughout the planning and execution of each responsibility. Try not to take it personal, which can be difficult because you are the parent or guardian of a graduating student too! Commiserate with your co-chair to prevent things from blowing out of proportion. We haven't lost anybody yet!

Note that the subcommittee file names are numbered in monthly chronological order, so that you know when each subcommittee should step into action.

Communication

Parents and guardians are receiving a lot of information these days. To save yourself the headache of multiple emails on the same topic, try to include as many details in your email as possible. This would include dates, times, locations, instructions, and your contact information at the close of each email. Have your co-chair proofread your emails before you send them, to check for missing details. This will save you from multiple messages when one could do.

You may have done this before, but don't be afraid to ask questions. Reach out to the contacts at the school, most of them have done this more than once. They are happy to answer questions early that prevent bigger problems later.

Here is your timeline. It seems long because we've included samples for much of your communication. This allows you to cut, paste, tweak and send. Edit this timeline with your experience and correspondence edits so the next co-chairs will be able to do the same. Read through it and then meet with the people you think will be able to clarify anything that doesn't make sense to you. The earlier you do this, the smoother this whole process will be.

Try to do all communications through the Graduation gmail account. This leaves a nice 'paper' trail for future committees.

A Little History

Graduation and financial assistance for graduating students to attend the trip to Washington DC are funded through the monies raised by the Spaghetti Supper and 7th Grade Play. (Specifically, the Spaghetti Supper revenue pays for the expenses of the 7th Grade Play, and the revenue of the 7th Grade Play is used for graduation and DC expenses.)

For many years the week of graduation was filled with local activities, entertainment for the most part, and graduation specific costs. We then came to understand that because the funds are held by the PTO, and the PTO is a nonprofit, the funds could not be spent on the entertainment for the week, but were fine to be used for the specific graduation costs. Then the school helped out by creating education-related activities that allowed the class funds to be used. Which has recently morphed into the 8th grade trip to DC.

Some entertainment style events have remained. However, these events are not paid for by the funds raised. Families make the decision on which events they want their graduate to attend and then pay for the event. There are funds available for families who need financial assistance through the Business

Carlisle Public Schools Graduation

Co-Chairpersons Subcommittee Guide

Manager at the school. Lunch brought in from Chipotle during graduation week is just one sample of an event.

Right now, the class funds are used for graduation specific events; Treasury Breakfast, graduation ceremony, graduation reception and the class gift. You can create name tee shirts to the week, but these are also not part of the budget, and will need time to set up for the sale, printing and delivery.

Budget

Once all of the expenses for the 7th grade play have been paid, then you have the budget for graduation. The first line item to address is the financial support students may need for the DC trip. Some students will need the entire trip covered, others only a portion. The Class Representative works with the Middle School Principal to identify how many potential scholarships may be needed for the DC trip, the rest of the funds are used for graduation centered events; Treasury Breakfast, graduation ceremony, graduation reception and the class gift.

Documents

You'll want to gather a few documents before you begin. Subcommittee chairs will need:

- The PTO Tax Exempt ID form, ask the PTO President for this - online for easy distribution
- The Buzz publication dates, find this on the school website, <https://www.carlisle.k12.ma.us>

Access

- access to graduation GMail account; ID: carlislegraduation@gmail.com / PW: Gleason1966*
- Access to 2020 Class Representative GMail: 2020CPSCClassRep@gmail.com / PW: Wilkins01
- Access to 2019 Class Representative GMail: 2019CPSCClassRep@gmail.com /PW: Gleason01

Timeline

September

- Class Representative identifies two (2) parents to co-chair graduation - it is important that this opportunity is open to the entire class of parents and guardians. Some see this as the last opportunity to volunteer for their child's CPS experience and will suddenly volunteer when they have never stepped forward before.

Early January

- Parent Co-Chairs are in place
- Co-Chairs begin recruiting for Subcommittee Chairs;
 1. Treasury Coffee
 2. Slide Show
 3. Campus Clean Up
 4. Graduation Ceremony
 5. Graduation Reception
 6. Seating/Tickets
 7. Photographer
 8. Programs
 9. Flowers

Sample Email:

Dear 8th Grade Parents & Guardians,

Carlisle Public Schools Graduation

Co-Chairpersons Subcommittee Guide

I don't know about you, but I never imagined this time would come! Seems like we were just putting our 8th graders on the Kindergarten bus, and now I'm writing to you about graduation from 8th grade!

I am chairing graduation for our class and want to extend an invitation to you to participate in the 2020 Graduation Committee. We will be responsible for planning and executing the following:

- Treasury Breakfast - more of a continental, lite food reception
- Slide Show
- Campus Clean up for graduation ceremony
- Graduation ceremony
- Graduation reception following graduation
- Flowers
- Seating/Tickets
- Photographer
- New/Other ideas to be considered; Name Tee Shirts, Kimballs in August

One or two parents will manage each of these projects. We will meet several times between now and graduation, dates and times to be determined by the group of volunteers.

I realize that not everyone can participate on the committee, but I would appreciate hearing your thoughts and ideas.

If you are interested in participating on the committee, please reply and let me know which project you are interested in working on, and if you are willing to chair that project.

If you can't join the committee, but have some ideas or concerns, please reply to this email with your comments. Do this sooner rather than later so we can incorporate your ideas/concerns into our planning.

Thanks very much,

Names of Co-Chairs

January

- Full committee in place
- Co-Chairs meet to review graduation tasks and create sign-up
- Co-Chairs meet with Middle School Principal to discuss end of year activities
- Introductory email is sent by co-chairs to Middle School Principal, Cafeteria Manager and Facilitates contact
- Class Treasurer provides budget for graduation

Carlisle Public Schools Graduation

Co-Chairpersons Subcommittee Guide

- Ask Middle School Principal to identify students who are home schooled to invite them to participate in graduation. This simple prompt is all that you need to do for now. They appreciate the prompt.
- Find out the deadlines for the Buzz publications for the rest of the school year so you can make best use of the Buzz to reach out to graduating families.
- Ask the Middle School Teachers who are working on graduation if they would like us to initiate a shirt sale that features a shirt with all of the graduating students names on the back. These shirts will be sold close to cost as it is not a fundraiser. Establish a subcommittee chair if the class wants these shirts. The sale can be done on the PTO website, but must meet their schedule needs.

February

- Contact Facilities Manager, introduce them to Ticket Subcommittee Chair(s) and Community Service Clean Up Day Subcommittee Chair(s) *See sample email below.
- Event Calendar is updated and shared via Google with Administration
- Intro email goes out to Committee Chairs and kick off meeting is held
- 7th grade liaison is identified via 7th Grade Class Representative, to chair graduation reception volunteers

March

- Sign-up goes out for Parent Volunteers
- Treasury Coffee, Ceremony and Graduation Reception subcommittee chairs coordinate a visit to the PTO storage shed to assess the supplies remaining for their needs.
- Send parent communication with dress code prior to April vacation
- Request same communication sent out via Middle School Principal
- Ask the class treasurer for the PTO Tax Exempt ID form. This should be a sheet of paper that can be photocopied for each of the subcommittee chairs, or a PDF that can be shared online.
- Co-Chairs reach out to 7th Grade Class Representative to ask them to identify Graduation Reception Hosts (7th Grade Volunteers). These folks will host the reception so graduating families can enjoy the reception.
- Provide Video Retrospective Subcommittee Chair with email addresses of each graduate's parent or guardian. Consider using a dedicated gmail account for all of the correspondence to keep it from your personal inbox!
- Reach out to the Video Retrospective Subcommittee Chair to see if they have set up their online files and have a date to send correspondence to families.
- Include Kimball's gathering 'save the date' for the night before CCHS starts in August/September in correspondence about graduation

April

- Email parents and guardians as soon as graduation date is established, ask Middle School Principal to include finalized date in their weekly newsletter, put it in the *Buzz*
- Ask Middle School Principal to send out dress code letter to parents and guardians (see sample below)
- Once schedule is set for graduation week, create a flier to go home with students and send out via Middle School Principal, Buzz and email.
- Flower coordinator should obtain number of graduates and all flower needs from the school and have an initial conversation with the florist.
- Program subcommittee chair should make initial contact with program printer. Obtain a copy of previous year's graduation program to begin editing process.

Carlisle Public Schools Graduation

Co-Chairpersons Subcommittee Guide

- Include Kimball's gathering 'save the date' for the night before CCHS starts in August/September in correspondence about graduation
- Ask all subcommittees determine their volunteer needs - with specific dates and times - to create one SignUpGenius for all graduation volunteer needs. (Campus Clean Up, Reception, Flowers, Treasury Coffee)

May

- Confirm that home schooled children whose families wish to participate in graduation are included in the list of graduates for the Ticket/Seating subcommittee.
- Obtain full email list - both parents/guardians for each graduate - from the Assistant to the Superintendent and provide it to the Ticket Subcommittee Chair
- Reach out to Clean Up Subcommittee Chair(s) to see if they need any help and are on task
- Confirm Clean Up Date and time
- Confirm ticket reservation invitation email distribution date from Ticket Subcommittee
- Include Kimballs gathering 'save the date' for the night before CCHS starts in August/September in correspondence about graduation

June

- Ask subcommittee chairs to edit their job descriptions and send them to you. Don't wait on this, once people get into their summer they will rarely complete this request.
- Ask subcommittee chairs to submit all receipts asap to class treasurer asap so the class account can be closed.
- Concord printing is going to mail the program printing bill to the PTO address in late June, early July.

August

- Remind students via parents/guardians about the gathering at Kimballs the night before school starts at CCHS

Correspondence Templates

Chair Ordering Confirmation

February XX, 20XX

Hello Rob,

We wanted to reach out again as we're getting closer to our grand finale - 8th grade graduation. It's my understanding that you'll take the lead on ordering and setting up the chairs for graduation on the plaza.

We wanted to be sure you were introduced to two parent volunteers (copied above):

_____ - will lead the Community Service Campus Clean Up the day before graduation

_____ - is in charge of ticketing in case of inclement weather

Both will be in touch with you over the next several months.

Carlisle Public Schools Graduation Co-Chairpersons Subcommittee Guide

Thanks so much and we look forward to working together

Dress Code DRAFT Letter from Middle School Principal:

April 20XX

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our eighth grade graduation will take place on DATE at 6:30 PM. Please note the following suggested dress code for the graduates during our graduation ceremony:

We ask that students dress appropriately for the occasion, we suggest an outfit that your graduate would wear if they were attending a family wedding. For those who choose to wear dresses, the students sit elevated in front of a large audience, please avoid excessively tight, low-cut or short dresses. Light or dark pants may be worn however we that ask that shorts, jeans, cargo, and carpenter pants, not be worn that evening. Dress shoes are preferred and we request that sneakers, hiking boots, and hats not be worn. Shoes with lower heels are suggested and less hazardous for our students who need to climb the risers and walk across the stage to receive their diplomas.

Please be in touch with my office if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Middle School Principal