

BCCHE Graduation Guidelines 2012

BCCHE is proud to sponsor the end of year celebration for all BCCHE member families and commencement exercises for high school graduates. Graduation is normally broken into two parts, a time of recognition for grades PK - 11th grade and a formal graduation ceremony for graduating seniors. BCCHE leadership is responsible for organizing and conducting the first part of the grade recognition ceremony and takes approximately 30-45 minutes. The Senior ceremony is overseen by BCCHE leadership, but is primarily the responsibility of the families of the graduating seniors.

Senior Graduation Ceremony

The goal of the graduation ceremony is to honor the seniors and those who invested in their lives in a way that honors Christ.

Each parent has the privilege of presenting their graduate with a diploma, and the opportunity to speak into the life of the graduate. The date and time of the graduation ceremony each year is set through a consensus of the BCCHE Leadership and graduating seniors. Graduates and families are not limited in the number of people they may invite and is a free event for guests and family members.

Planning the Ceremony

The Graduation Planning Committee is made up of one parent from each qualifying graduate's family. Several planning meetings will be scheduled throughout the spring prior to graduation in order to plan the ceremony. The Graduation Planning Committee must submit a timeline of important deadlines (re: slideshows and financial) and meetings to BCCHE Leadership by February 1, 2012. The graduation ceremony should clearly reflect the values and principles of BCCHE. Philippians 2: 1-11 and Romans 14 have been offered for consideration in the evaluation of decisions made by the graduating families. It is the responsibility of the Graduation Planning Committee to communicate with BCCHE Leadership in the event that a member or members of the Committee are not abiding by the biblical references above.

Graduation Planning Committee members are encouraged to get feedback from their children at home. The parents are responsible for planning the graduation for their children; only the parents are to meet to discuss the various ideas. The planning meetings are intended to encourage open discussion and provide an opportunity to voice any disagreements. If necessary, leadership will facilitate the meeting to insure healthy discussion and creative solutions. Philippians 2:3 says "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other as better than themselves." Romans 14:13 "Let us not therefore judge one another anymore; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block of an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

The planning meetings will determine date, time, place, music, speaker, and sequence. Any speaker, video presentation, special music, etc. is subject to BCCHE leadership approval. Every effort should be made to divide the work equally among graduating families, all the way down to who will serve cake and punch, refilling punch bowls and clean up so there is no misunderstanding on "the big day." These responsibilities are not intended to be carried out solely by the graduating families. The Graduation Planning Committee should call on participation from fellow BCCHE members.

Time limitations will be established at the discretion of BCCHE leadership. Each family will be allotted the same amount of time to present a diploma to their graduate. If a speaker is desired, the combined time for the speaker and diploma presentations is not to exceed 45 minutes. The entire graduation portion of the ceremony, including invocation, processional, special music, power point presentations, etc. is not to exceed 1 hour.

Power point songs must be submitted for review by the Graduation Planning Committee at least 60 days prior to the ceremony date. The Graduation Planning Committee must provide feedback regarding slideshows and song selections within 10 days . Any changes must be completed and returned in 15 days for a final review by the Graduation Planning Committee. Once slideshows are completed and accepted by the Graduation Planning Committee, a final copy will be submitted for review by BCCHE leadership 30 days prior to the graduation ceremony. BCCHE Leadership retains the right to overrule decisions and settle disputes.

- **Song lyrics should convey hope for the future and be void of references to lost love, broken relationships, party lifestyles, or vulgar language or themes. Song selections must not be a “clean” version of an unacceptable song.**
- **Slideshow presentations may not contain any pictures that are immodest, depict the consumption of alcohol or behavior not becoming of a follower of Christ.**

Eligibility

Any student may participate in the graduation ceremony that meets the following criteria:

- The student’s parent(s) or guardian certifies that the student has met their requirements for graduation.
- The student has homeschooled for at least one full school year immediately prior to graduation. Those currently taking college courses are eligible if they homeschooled one full school year immediately prior to the start of the college courses.
- The student is no more than 21 years old at the time of graduation.
- The student has been a member of BCCHE the school year immediately prior to graduation.
- **Only families who have been members for a year prior to the graduation year will be on the Graduation Planning Committee. Costs will be shared equally among all graduating families.**

Cost

BCCHE will contribute \$350.00 toward the graduation ceremony. If the number of graduates exceeds 5, then BCCHE will contribute an additional \$50.00 per graduate up to a maximum of \$600.00.

Example: If the total number of graduates is 8, then the amount contributed by BCCHE would be \$500.00.

\$350.00 (base amount for the first 5 graduates) plus \$150.00 (\$50.00 X 3 additional graduates) for a total contribution of \$500.00.

The money may be used for the facility rental, clean-up, programs, audiovisual, cake, and paper goods. The graduating families will pay for the flowers, video reproduction, fancy punch, diplomas & any "extra" things. Any gift to the graduation speaker is the responsibility of the graduating families.

However, as responsible stewards of the money entrusted to BCCHE, any money provided for graduation is based on the actual available funds for that year.

Diploma

The BCCHE graduation ceremony is an opportunity for the homeschool family to present a diploma, procured and signed by the parents, to their graduating student. It is up to the parents to determine if a child has completed his high school graduation requirements. The purpose of the graduation ceremony is to offer families a setting for their graduation celebration. Diplomas can be purchased online from HSLDA or any other company at the discretion of the parents of the graduate.

Caps and Gowns

The cap and gown will be blue. The tassel color on the cap is to be determined by each individual graduate. The graduate is required to wear these items in order to participate. If the seniors wish to throw their caps, they need to do it outside or in the back after they leave the ceremony.

Rehearsal

The graduation rehearsal date and time will be determined by the families of graduating seniors and BCCHE Leadership. It is mandatory for the graduate and at least one parent to attend and participate in the rehearsal. In the event this requirement is not met, the graduate forfeits participation in the graduation ceremony. No refunds will be issued.

Conduct and Dress

It is BCCHE's intention to offer a beautiful ceremony to honor the graduates and their families. The graduation should be considered a dress-up affair for parents and graduates. Graduates will wear a cap and gown with semi-formal Sunday clothes in order to participate in the graduation ceremony. We ask that graduates not add to or alter their cap and gown in any way that would detract from the uniform appearance of all graduates.

We ask that graduates sit with their parents at graduation and that each graduate be courteous to the other graduates and the audience, follow directions as requested, and not talk or make loud noises during the ceremony. Please, no artificial noise making devices (i.e. air horns). Please convey this to all family and invited guests. This ceremony is a public affair. It is important to all that we "in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves" as this reflects positively upon one another and BCCHE as a whole.

Graduates Reception

There will be a reception honoring the graduates immediately after the commencement ceremony. All graduates, their families and friends are invited to attend. BCCHE hosts this optional event and there is no charge to attend.

There will be space on a table to allow each graduate to display a poster board presentation of pictures of their homeschooling experience along with space for other school-related memorabilia. We are envisioning artwork, poetry, collages, etc.

Closing Thoughts

As the families anticipate this event for their graduates, they are encouraged to demonstrate Godly love for one another! Noble efforts to make this the best graduation the world has ever known may lead to rising tensions, especially as the glorious date approaches. If battle lines are drawn, casualties may occur on the playing field. Some may emerge as self-perceived victors, others as self-perceived losers, and the remaining players left trying to hold it all together. It is our desire to avoid this scenario by establishing these guidelines. We hope that the graduation ceremony will be a wonderful experience for each and every BCCHE family and especially joyful for those with graduating seniors.