



GRADUATION HANDBOOK



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“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength... Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:30-31

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For simplicity in this Handbook, the word “parents” is used with the full understanding that a number of our students are under the governance and care of persons other than the birth parent(s).



It is the intention of this handbook to present the guidelines and expectations required for a successful graduation year. We want the grade 12s to remember their year with special memories. However, for that to happen, we need student participation, parent cooperation and teacher/staff commitment. Together we can create a dynamic and special high school year for our soon-to-be graduates.

SECTION 1: GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS



- 1.1 Credits/Courses
- 1.2 Graduation Capstone Evening

1.1 CREDITS/COURSES

The graduation program begins in grade 10 and is completed at the end of grade 12. There are 80 minimum credits needed to graduate. MRCS expects all graduates to have a minimum of 90 credits and complete three years of Bible to earn an MRCS diploma of distinction. Diplomas will indicate how many credits the graduate has completed. Of those 90 credits there are a number of compulsory courses that need to be completed: grade 10 and 11 (Physical and Health Education, Math, Science, English, Social Studies, Career Life Education), grade 12 (English, Global Intercultural Studies, World Citizenship and Career Life Connections). In order to gather enough credits, students need to take other core and elective courses, (refer to course planning document). Students are expected to have a full schedule and will receive a study block in grade 10, 11 and 12. This will ensure students get a well-rounded and complete education. The ministry requires a minimum of 4 grade 12 courses (including English 12 and Career Life Connection). The Academic Advisor is the point person for credits, transcripts and course selection/adds/drops. The Academic Advisor is available by appointment for academic advice, course information, graduation information, letters of recommendations and scholarship information.

1.2 GRADUATION CAPSTONE EVENING

The grade 12s will be working on their Capstone during Career Life Connections 12. Their presentations are completed and shared with family, teachers and friends, at the school, during an evening in April. The portfolio will cover aspects of the Core Competencies, MRCS's Biblical Throughlines, as well as their reflections on their time at MRCS and future plans. These presentations fully meet the requirements for the Graduation Capstone mandated by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. Invitations will be given to the grade 12s to hand out to friends and family. The capstone presentation is a pass or fail assignment and is mandatory for graduation.

SECTION 2: GRADUATION INFORMATION



- 2.1 Grad Meeting
- 2.2 Grad Christmas Event
- 2.3 Traditional Skip Day
- 2.4 Grad Trip
- 2.5 Grad Ceremony
- 2.6 Grad Banquet
- 2.7 Fundraising

2.1 GRAD MEETING

There is a grad parent/student meeting in early September of the grade 12 school year. All grad students and parents are asked to attend this very important first meeting. During the meeting parents will: go over the handbook, volunteer for graduation decorating committee, and participate in a Q&A period.

2.2 GRAD CHRISTMAS EVENT

The high school teachers/staff and principal sponsor this event. There is no cost to the graduates for this event. It will be held in early December during the first block of the day. The highlights of the morning are the food, fellowship, devotions and a special 'memorable' letter/card given to them from their parents. It is very important that there is a letter or card for every grade 12 student. The office will send out an email and reminders to parents.

2.3 TRADITIONAL SKIP DAY

This is organized by the grad class. It usually follows the day after the Grad Event. There is no grad prank or blessing allowed at MRCS. Criminal charges will be brought against students who break and enter into a school building whether as part of a prank or as an act of theft or vandalism.

2.4 GRAD EVENT

The school will plan and book a grad event which will take place in May.

- The school plans and books the grad event, including the location.
- The grad event will be a date that works within the school calendar. In the case of a midday departure, students are expected to attend their morning classes.
- Effort will be made to make sure that the grad event is affordable for all students (TBD).
- Depending on the destination and cost of the event, parent chaperones may be needed. All parent chaperones are required to pay 50% of the per person cost.
- If parent chaperones are required, all interested parents will be invited to submit their names as chaperones. It is best if we have chaperones based on the number of female/male students. If there are more parents than the required number of needed chaperones, the parents may be chosen by drawing of names.
- The teacher/staff representatives for the grad committee will be responsible to secure a male and female staff chaperone.
- The teacher/staff representatives will have their TOCs covered by the school.
- If the teacher/staff chaperones cannot attend the grad event, it will be the teacher/staff's responsibility to recommend a replacement teacher/staff, with approval by the principal.
- The guidelines and expectations of student conduct for the event are the same as outlined in the High School Handbook.
- For secondary planned adventures, consent forms may need to be completed by the students and extra costs may be incurred.
- Depending on the amount of fundraising completed by the students, the cost of the trip may be affected.

2.5 GRADUATION CEREMONY

- The ceremony is organized and supervised by the school's grad committee.
- The ceremony will be held after high school exams are complete. It will begin at 6:00 PM and will be cap & gown.
- The ceremony is held in a nearby local church. All bookings are done by the school.
- The church is booked one year in advance and secured with a deposit.
- The church does not require decorations.
- The school will provide a photographer for the ceremony evening.
- The ceremony program is created and printed by the school.
- The agenda and songs at ceremony are organized by the school.
- The graduates are seated in alphabetical order at the front of the church.
- There are reserved seats for guests, staff and teachers participating in the ceremony.
- The principal and a representative from the board (usually the Chair of the Board) will address the graduating class.
- Grad blessings conducted at the ceremony are decided by the teachers/staff. Each teacher/staff member volunteers for 2-3 students to bless with a verse/prayer.
- The graduating class nominates the valedictorian student(s). The student(s) may be nominated based on their academic standing, community involvement and positive Christian character. The nominations are approved by the administration and high school staff before a final decision is announced. The school makes the final choice.
- The rehearsal for the ceremony will be held on the last day of school. It is mandatory that all grade 12 students attend. The rehearsal is usually 30-45 minutes in length.
- School scholarships are provided by donations. Students will need to apply for these scholarships. Details are available from the Academic Advisor and details are shared in Career Life Connections. Other outside scholarships awarded to our graduates will be announced at the ceremony. It is the responsibility of the students to inform the office/administration of any other scholarships received so they can be added to the program and announced at the ceremony.

2.6 GRAD BANQUET

- The grad banquet will be held on a separate evening from the ceremony.
- The venue is organized and supervised by the school's staff and teachers.
- The school determines the menu. There is no alcohol served during this event. Dietary needs will be considered.
- Administration will determine the Master of Ceremonies for the evening.
- Administration and the MC will determine the program for the evening.
- The seating arrangement is completed by the office. Requests for seating arrangements can be made at the office.
- Seating arrangements are posted by the school at the banquet.
- The Grad parent decorating committee is allocated \$350 for decorating the banquet room. The school is responsible for communicating with the venue to find times to decorate the space.
- There will be a dance following the dinner. The playlist music will be created by the DJ, and pre-approved by Administration.

- The school will provide a person to DJ the dance.
- The banquet ends at 11:00 PM and the parent committee is responsible for clearing the decorations out of the venue that evening.
- Any events, outside of the Grad ceremony and banquet, are planned, hosted, supervised, and provided by the parents, and are not associated with the school in any way.

2.7 FUNDRAISING

Grads are permitted two annual Purdy's fundraisers (Christmas & Easter) through the school. These funds will be used to offset individual costs for the Grad Event.

Grads and their parents may organize other fundraisers, individually (ie bottle drives, car washes) in order to fundraise for their graduation expenses. These must be organized and run by the grads and parents and may not use school-based events and locations to raise personal funds for graduation.

SECTION 3: PHOTOGRAPHS



- 3.1 Grad Photographs
- 3.2 Ceremony Photographs

3.1 GRAD PHOTOGRAPHS

Individual grad photos are done in February. They will be done at Maple Ridge Christian School by Lifetouch. Sign up will be done through Lifetouch. There will be a sitting fee. The sitting fee includes the portfolio and composite received at graduation. Individual orders can be done online through Lifetouch.

3.2 CEREMONY PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos will be taken at the ceremony by a school hired photographer. All aspects of the graduation ceremony evening will be captured. A digital gallery with these photos will be sent to all grad families. There will be no cost to the families for these photographs.

SECTION 4: MRCS ONE TO ONE LAPTOP PROGRAM



- 4.1 Rationale
- 4.2 Vision
- 4.3 Frequently Asked Questions
- 4.4 Agreement

MRCS One to One Laptop Program

4.1 Rationale:

To improve the learning experience for the grade 12 students. To empower the senior students to work independently, and responsibly with technology.

4.2 Vision:

Students in the Graduating class will have the use of a Chromebook, provided by MRCS, for the duration of the school year. The laptops provided will continue to be owned by MRCS even though the student will be allowed to take this device with them between classes and after school hours. As MRCS retains ownership of these devices, it allows for the provision of the school's software licenses to be pushed onto the student's device without legal complications. Students will have their own personal "standard" type account on the device. This will partially limit their ability to modify the applications, or operating system in some ways. If they find that they are unable to modify the computer to personalize it or add apps that are not approved, they will need to talk to the IT Admin person at the school. The hope for this program is that students will find success in the freedom of maintaining their own data and school work on a device that they will take personal care of.

4.3 FAQ:

- **What is the benefit of a 1:1 program in Education?**
 - There is a general consensus in education that the availability of resources to students markedly improves its usefulness. Shared devices reduce the student's educational efficacy due to time spent on file management, configuration, and device customization. (if a student takes ownership of the device, they will appreciate and thus take advantage of its usefulness more)
- **What are the disadvantages of a 1:1 program?**
 - There are many controversies around this. Generally speaking, the most prevalent is the agreement that "Screen time" is unhealthy. Though this is still being researched, it is an issue that is constantly being debated both online and in parent groups. Parents and students will be responsible for their own amount of usage, keeping in mind that too much could be considered as a negative.
- **Do I need to have wireless internet at home?**
 - While it is not required, it is definitely recommended. Even before the advent of a 1:1 program at MRCS, students were required to submit the majority of their classwork online.
- **Will students be allowed to install "Apps or Programs" on the computer?**
 - Yes and No. Students will need to speak to the IT Administrator first to find out if the app is suitable and appropriate. Students will be able to install apps from the Google Play store using their MRCS Gmail accounts.
- **Will students have to observe the school's network use policy while on the internet even though it is on a device that is not at school?**
 - Yes. The device will at all times be monitored by the school's network and servers to ensure that the students have a safe and meaningful learning experience while on the internet. It will ultimately be up to the parents to monitor surfing habits and treatment of the laptop, while in the care of the student.
 - Students and Parents will both need to be sure that the laptop is well cared for both in terms of software health and physical condition. Using the laptop in a manner that does not conform to the MRCS Network Use Policy and/or code of conduct will result in consequences being taken on a case-by-case basis.

- **Will my network at home be hacked by MRCS, since the school is able to monitor my child's device?**
 - No. Only the device itself will initiate communication with the school, and only to send requests for websites and online resources. No other information, like usernames and passwords will be logged.
- **What if my child breaks the laptop?**
 - Accidents happen. The hope is that students will take the best personal care and keeping of their device. However, if a device is broken while in the care of the student, said student and/or family will be responsible for the cost of the parts needed for repair. Please note that MRCS will not be responsible for maintenance or repairs needed to keep the laptop in running order.
- **Will my student be given a case or a bag to carry the device in?**
 - No. Students / parents will need to provide a suitable bag for their laptop.
- **What happens if the device is used inappropriately?**
 - The school maintains that its teachers should proactively educate the students about what to do if inappropriate content appears on their screen. In a situation where an infraction takes place, a meeting will be set up with the student, parents, the network administrator, and a member of the leadership team to determine a course of action.
- **What if inappropriate content inadvertently appears on my child's screen?**
 - This happens all the time, and unfortunately is a side effect of the sinful world we live in. As stated above, students are taught how to deal with this at MRCS and should never "click through" to said content. The "Click through" is what will alert the network admin, not the inadvertent navigation to a site that has the inappropriate content.

Often the first thought is to either deny access completely to everything or implement a content filter. SCSBC, in their document *Growing Digital Citizenship*, outlines the problems with both of these approaches if used in exclusivity.

1. Complete denial of technology denies the reality that our children will, at one point, be exposed to the internet and technology that will most likely be used in their workplace and daily life in the future. While this is a very simple solution, it could cause unhealthy use in the future, when the child is finally exposed.
2. Content filters are good, but they are never perfect. No matter how good your filter is, if your child wants to "get around" the filter, they will. Your child is learning to be more tech savvy and more clever with tech on a daily basis. Whether it be through friends devices or interesting hacks, there is simply no end to the ingenuity of our kids. Educating kids on the need for online propriety is key.

In reality we need to deal with not just a symptom of bad technology use but the root, which is in the heart (Jer. 17:9, Mk 7:21-23).

As Christians we recognize that we are sinful people and that even our children are tempted and often fail just as we do (Ge. 6:5,8:21, Ps. 51:5, Jn. 8:34). It is our responsibility to make sure that our children are reasonably safe from accessing content that will cause them to stumble and that there is a healthy dialogue at home regarding good digital citizenship.

Here are a few things that you can do to ensure the well-being of your child:

1. Put the devices to bed at night. When bedtime comes, devices also go to bed in an area off limits to your child.
2. Use the internet only in public places in the home. Create a public study place in your home where your child can work and be seen.
3. Restrict leisure hours on electronic devices. This will encourage other healthy habits not connected to technology.
4. Do not send your child to a friend's house with their device and be aware of what devices friends are bringing when they are visiting.
5. Talk to your child about their use of technology, be aware of what services they are using and how they work.
6. Read all of the privacy policies of the services your child is using or wishes to use.
7. Above all, demonstrate good technology usage yourself.

What does MRCS do to help protect your child while online?

1. Starting in middle school, we talk about good digital citizenship. In high school, we continue this conversation and talk about appropriate usage, privacy in regards to social media, search bias in services such as Google and the importance of living a life of integrity in the digital realm and the physical world.
2. MRCS employs a network content filter and firewall that uses blacklists, keyword triggers, heuristic analysis and decryption to block most of the bad stuff. It also employs a firewall that blocks most VPN services that can be used to circumvent the filters. As I am sure you can appreciate, while we do our best, no content filter is perfect, but we try!

4.4 Agreement

Please return this signed page as a statement of agreement to the following:

This completed letter is a signed document that states my intent to allow my son / daughter to keep care of a school owned (Maple Ridge Christian School) laptop.

By signing this letter, I agree to each of the outlined points above, and state that I will take responsibility for any damages or behaviour that my child might incur, whether that be accidental or intentional. I understand that the costs outlined above will be charged to me for any repairs to the laptop. I agree to make the full payment once the required repairs are completed.

In addition to these stipulations, I agree to ensure that my son / daughter adhere to the Maple Ridge Christian School Network Use Policy, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Student Name: _____

Parent / Guardian's name: _____

Parent / Guardian's signature: _____

Date: _____