



Northwood High School

Home of the Timberwolves

"For the good of the Pack"

January 22, 2026

Dear NHS Seniors and Parents,

Congratulations to you and your family as you finish your senior year at Northwood High School! We are so very proud of all our students and their hard work as they complete their final semester of compulsory education. NHS has worked hard to ensure students are well prepared for the next step in their lives, and we are looking forward to celebrating with your family and students. This letter and the packet attached include important information regarding Commencement and other senior activities. Our hope is to provide you with all of the details of the celebrations as well as include helpful information on ensuring the safety of our seniors during this exciting time. We hope you will review all deadlines and information as a family.

The Class of 2026 has 555 seniors! This year, we will return to the UCI Bren Center for the NHS Commencement Ceremony on Thursday, June 4th at 1:30 pm. Below you will find some important details about the event to ensure you can participate!

Senior Events

There are a variety of school-sponsored senior events planned for the Spring that we hope all seniors will be able to participate in. This includes the Senior BBQ, breakfast, and the PTSA-sponsored Grad Night. Information about these events is in the attached packet and found at www.northwoodhigh.org. Please note that there are a variety of unsponsored senior events and trips put on by outside groups; therefore, we will not accept any responsibility for students who participate. These trips are completely independent of the Irvine Unified School District and their policies. School officials share concern about the quality and safety of many of these trips, and we ask our parents to evaluate them carefully. In addition, there is no authorized "ditch day" for seniors. Seniors truant from school on a "ditch day" will lose their opportunity to participate in senior activities and the Prom. This type of unsupervised activity puts students' safety and well-being in jeopardy. We encourage families to communicate expectations for their students to ensure a smooth Spring.

Participation

Students will be allowed to participate in the ceremony if they have completed ALL required credits and school behavioral expectations. There are **three** main elements that students must monitor to ensure their participation:

1. **Grades and graduation requirements** - students who are in jeopardy of not meeting requirements are notified throughout the school year by their school counselor. On Monday, June 1st, the NHS counselors will complete final graduation checks for all seniors based on the final grades submitted by teachers. If a senior has not met all subject and credit requirements, a counselor will notify the senior and their parents to participate in a conference. At that conference, the senior will complete a signed contract regarding their plan to complete all requirements before the first day of school of the next school year to receive an NHS diploma. Seniors who have not completed all subject and credit requirements by June 2nd will not be allowed to participate in the commencement ceremony on Thursday, June 4th.
2. **Maintain positive behavior** - students must continue to adhere to the NHS Timberwolf Code of Conduct, including positive attendance. Students also must **NOT** enter campus after hours for any sort of "pranks", etc. Any violations may result in removal from this important ceremony. All outstanding detentions must be cleared.
3. **Senior Graduation Clearance Form** - forms will be distributed to seniors at the end of May with detailed instructions on when it must be completed and returned. This form must be returned for students to participate in the graduation ceremony.

Rehearsal

Seniors who meet all the graduation requirements and who choose to attend the Commencement are required to attend rehearsal on **Wednesday, June 3rd. Seniors must report to the NHS theater at 9 am and should expect to be at school until about noon.** Seniors must make the adjustments to their schedules to allow them to attend the rehearsal. **Attendance at rehearsal is required** for student participation in the graduation ceremony on Thursday, June 4th.

Graduation Event

Commencement Day: Thursday, June 4th – Seniors must report to the Theater at 11:30 am. Seniors may NOT bring cell phones, money, purses, yearbooks, cameras, flowers, or valuables into the theater on graduation day. Students should leave items they want to take directly after the ceremony with their families.

Caps & Gowns: All seniors must be dressed in an NHS cap and gown in order to participate in the commencement. Students have the option to purchase the cap and gown or borrow. The cap and gown may not have any items attached, draped, or written on them other than honors cords awarded to seniors **by NHS for academic recognition.** There are some limited allowances for students going into the military as well as cultural adornments. Information about this will be sent via email. Students who did not turn in their initial cap and gown order paperwork may still purchase a cap and gown, but must order through Jostens by April 1st. Caps and gowns will be distributed on June 3rd (Rehearsal Day). There will be a **limited** number of caps and gowns for sale on Rehearsal day for \$45 (cash only). Students who have chosen to borrow a cap and gown from Jostens must return all pieces to the school after the ceremony, or the diploma will be held.

Event Details:

- **Thursday, June 4th at 1:30 pm – Bren Event Center at UCI**
- **Ticket Information:** Admission to the ceremony will be by ticket only. There will be no ticket sales at the door. Each graduate will receive 2 free tickets. An additional 4 tickets per student will be available for purchase, and extra tickets will be available through a lottery system. All Commencement ticket information will be available through email and advisement in late March.
- **Seating:** The Bren Center will be open for seating 60 minutes before the ceremony. Seating will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. **Guests will not be permitted to bring balloons or noisemakers into the ceremony.** One ticket will admit one holder to the ceremony.
- **Parking:** Parking is available at the Bren Center parking structure (100 Mesa Road, Irvine, 92697) through purchase of a parking permit. Information will be available closer to the event.

Diplomas

Graduates receive only their diploma covers during the ceremony. Students may pick up their diplomas on Friday, June 5 from the Attendance window (1 pm to 3 pm). They may also pick them up Monday, June 8th to June 10th from the NHS Administration Office (9 am to 12 pm). Please check the office (949-936-7200) for additional dates. Graduates with unfulfilled obligations, such as non-returned textbooks, library books, uniforms, Chromebooks, and/or unpaid fines will have their diplomas held by the school until such obligations are fulfilled.

Northwood High School's Commencement for this senior class will be an exciting and memorable occasion. Through their outstanding accomplishments in academics, athletics, and the visual and performing arts, this graduating class has continued to set high standards for those who follow. We share your pride in this very special graduating Class of 2026 and hope that you will join us in celebrating their accomplishments. More information and details will be sent through ParentSquare and will be provided to students in Advisement. If you have further questions, do not hesitate to call our office at 949-936-7200.

Sincerely,

Eric Keith
Principal

Christina Banagas Engelerdt
Asst. Principal

Jennifer Petrosian
Student Activities Director