



James Madison High School

A TEA Recognized School

March 2011

Dear Graduating Seniors and Parents:

This letter will inform you of the events leading up to and including the commencement exercises of the Class of 2011 of James Madison High School. After reading it, should you still have questions, please feel free to call the school at 356-1400, extension 61448 for Ms. Nathalie Hall, assistant principal, or extension 61497 for Mrs. Karen Taliaferro, senior advisor.

Tickets will **not** be required for the 2011 graduation. All of your family members and guests are welcome without a ticket. Handicapped tickets for special seating area may be obtained from Mrs. Gesell in the Assistant Principal's Center. An area will be reserved for handicapped guests so they will not have to climb stairs. Only one guest will be permitted to sit with the handicapped guest in this reserved area.

Important Dates and Information

Tuesday Mar 29 - Josten's Delivery-graduation announcements, etc all Lunches/ Auditorium
Balance due on all orders

Saturday April 16 -Junior /Senior Prom, 8pm-12am at Omni Hotel I-10West@Wurzbach

Tuesday, April 26 - Senior Meeting - Gym (8:45am-2:30pm)

Wednesday, April 27 - Senior Farewell/Senior Dress Up Day. A program will be presented by the senior officers, advisor, and administrators. Senior superlatives and slide show will be presented in the auditorium. (8:45am-2:30pm).

Thursday, April 28 - Seniors report to campus @ 11:30am due to TAKS testing. Senior Meeting Gym
Then attend periods 3-8

Friday, April 29 - Senior Meeting - Gym and Annual Burger Bash (8:45am-12noon) then per 3-8

Monday, May 9 - Rehearsal for Senior Awards Night will be in the auditorium at 4:20 pm. All honorees will be notified individually before this rehearsal.

Tuesday, May 10 - Senior Awards Night- Madison Auditorium 7:00pm

The entire senior class and their families and friends are invited to celebrate the individual accomplishments of class members. All honorees should arrive by 6:30 pm. The awards ceremony will begin at 7:00 pm and will take no more than 90 minutes. Reception to follow.

May 25 - June 2 - These are exam days and regular attendance days. Seniors will attend all classes. Please remember that school is still in session and that proper dress and conduct are expected and required. **Please clear your obligations and turn in your textbooks this week. You will not have time to do this after exams.**

Wednesday, May 25 - Final exams will be given to seniors in **first and seventh periods**. Seniors must attend all class periods and take these exams. If a senior completes his/her exam before the end of the period, he/she will not be allowed to leave class.

Thursday, May 26 - Final exams will be given to seniors in **second and eighth periods**.

Friday, May 27 - Final exams will be given to seniors in **third and fifth periods**.

Monday, May 30 - Memorial Holiday/ No School

Tuesday, May 31 - Final exams will be given to seniors in **fourth and sixth periods**.

Wednesday, June 1 9:00 am-12:30pm - Seniors meet in Madison auditorium for a **MANDATORY MEETING**. The auditorium will be set up in graduation format - come early to find your seat. Graduation callers will practice names. Please make all changes politely. **Be prepared to stay the entire meeting. Leaving early will not be allowed.**

Wednesday, June 1 2:30 pm - Distribution of Caps and Gowns. Madison Cafeteria **YOU MUST CLEAR ALL YOUR OBLIGATIONS (pay fines, turn in textbooks, paperbacks, fees owed to faculty) BEFORE YOU MAY RECEIVE YOUR CAP AND GOWN.**

Thursday, June 2 9:00 am - Seniors will meet at the Calvary Temple (on O'Connor by Firestation) for the PTA sponsored complimentary Senior Brunch. Much planning and preparation by the PTA have gone into this event, and the organization should be commended for their generous hospitality to the seniors. Seniors may arrive at any time between 9:00-10:30am.

Monday, June 6 - Seniors must meet at Freeman Coliseum by 8:15 a.m. for a **MANDATORY REHEARSAL (8:30-10:30 AM)**. Seniors should enter the coliseum grounds at the West Gate by the railroad tracks and park in parking lot #9. An easy way to reach the West Gate is to exit Walters Street from I-35, make a left and proceed to Houston Street - make a left here. Once you cross the railroad tracks, you will see the West Gate entrance on the left.

This rehearsal is a working session at which the total cooperation of all persons will be needed and expected. This is our only on-site rehearsal. **Any student who misses the rehearsal will NOT be allowed to participate in the commencement exercises.** If you need to make any changes in your cap and/or gown, please see Jostens backstage before the rehearsal begins.

Monday, June 6 - This is it!! **Graduation Evening!!** Seniors will report backstage by **6:30 pm**. Again, enter at the West Gate and go to parking lot #9. Please allow plenty of travel time, especially with after work traffic on major highways. We make a special appeal to parents of our seniors to support us in emphasizing that this is a ceremony belonging to over six hundred students and their

parents. Each individual should strive to preserve the solemnity and dignity of this occasion. You can be assured that school officials will take whatever actions are necessary to insure this for all. The Seniors of 2011 have been and will continue to be a truly outstanding group of young people. Every attempt has been made to make this an occasion that everyone will always remember with great joy and honor. Only graduating seniors will sit on the floor of the arena. All guests will sit in the seats above the arena floor. **The parking rate for seniors (you must have your cap and gown visible) and anyone else in the vehicle is \$3. All other vehicles will be charged \$5.**

For the best possible commencement exercises please make note of the following:

1. Police officers and Madison staff members will be on duty in all areas of the coliseum for your assistance. Please call on them if needed.
2. Please remain seated for the entire program. Please do not leave after a friend or relative has been honored. The program will last approximately 90 minutes, and we wish to honor each one of the graduates.
3. A commercial photographer will take a picture of each senior as he/she receives a diploma. Sam's Studio will mail information explaining how you may purchase the pictures.
4. Please do not whistle, blow an air horn, yell or call out individual names. This is embarrassing to all and takes away from the dignity of the ceremony. Ushers and police officers will remove individuals who disrupt the ceremony.
5. A professional video of graduation is available for purchase. Seniors will be given order information at rehearsal.
6. For family members not able to attend the ceremony, there will be a streaming video/web cam of the ceremony online. Web site will be made available as soon as possible.

There is a picture taking area to the right of the stage on a first-come availability. However, there are no electrical outlets for use.

Graduating seniors are reminded of the following:

1. Dress appropriately.
 - a. Men should wear a dress shirt with collar and tie, **slacks**, and dress shoes (no work boots or tennis shoes).
 - b. Ladies should wear a nice, street-length dress and comfortable heels. (Long dresses that show below the graduation gown do not look well). Ladies must not bring purses to graduation, as there is no place to store them during the ceremony.
 - c. **Do not bring cell phones or cameras behind stage—leave them locked up in your car or with your parents.**
2. Graduating seniors should arrive at the Coliseum no later than 6:30 pm and should begin to line up immediately. Do NOT gather in the lobby or hallways or coliseum floor where guests will be arriving. **Again, allow plenty of travel time to arrive on time.**

3. Seniors who engage in inappropriate behavior will be removed immediately from the ceremony. They will **not** be allowed to continue with the remainder of the ceremony and they will **not** receive their diploma. Those students and parents will need to make an appointment with the Principal the following week. Please understand that this is a solemn occasion. We need to respect all who attend. Seniors need to follow all instructions.
4. While on stage receiving your diploma, any Senior who makes any gestures or raises their hands above their waist for any reason other than to shake hands with the board member will be removed and **not** allowed to continue in the ceremony. Those seniors will be held backstage for the remainder and will **not** receive their diploma.
5. Should there be a mistake on your diploma, please do not be insulted or display your disappointment. All mistakes will be corrected at the proper time. If you ordered a miniature diploma, it will be attached. If there is a problem, please contact the school during the week after the ceremony.
6. Please keep your caps on during the presentation of colors, the pledge, and the national anthem.
7. After you receive your diploma and you leave the stage, return to your seat and be seated.
8. Please end the ceremony in an orderly and dignified recessional. Congratulate your friends backstage.
9. Remember to keep your cap and tassel but return the robe backstage as you walk out.
10. You are expected to demonstrate the Madison pride, which distinguishes this Class of 2011.

Thank you for this opportunity to convey information pertaining to graduation. We hope that this time will prove to be an exciting and memorable time of your life. Let all of us work together to share our pride in the Class of 2011—the thirty-second graduating class of James Madison High School. Sincerely,

Karen Taliaferro
Senior Class Advisor

Nathalie Hall
Assistant Principal

Chris Thompson
Principal