

Dear Class of 2026 Students and Families,

What an exciting and busy time of year this is for those who are nearing the end of their high school journey! We're excited for you as you navigate these final weeks. This letter should provide you with information about the upcoming school events for seniors. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

To mark the college where you are attending and request your final transcript, you need to:

1. Log in to Naviance from the link in Student Resources on the SHS website
2. Be sure to use the Single Sign on option
3. Click on the **About Me** tab at the top and drop down to the **Graduation Survey**
4. Begin answering the question; be sure to mark the ONE school you plan to attend and then submit the survey.
5. Next, Click on the Colleges Tab at the top and drop down to **"Colleges I'm Applying To."**
6. For your final college choice, **check the box beside the college you are attending.**
7. Then click on the blue plus sign at the top (+) that says **REQUEST TRANSCRIPTS.**
8. Choose the box beside the **"Final"** transcript option and then click on the **"Request and Finish"** button at the bottom of that page to save.

If you have any problems, please see your counselor.

2026 Graduation Survey

- You will need to do this while logged in to your SHS Google account. Families - this will not work from your personal Google login.
- The survey must be completed by **Friday, May 8, 2026** in order for the scholarship information you report to be used in the graduation program or included in the Senior Awards Assembly.

Senior Day Awards Ceremony

Help us properly recognize you in the graduation program, keep our records up-to-date, and recognize you at the Senior Awards Assembly.

Graduation Slide

As your name is called at graduation, your senior portrait will be projected on a large screen behind the stage. Along with the portrait, we include up to 3 items about you. We want those items to be the things you would like to have shared.

- Please *do not* include future occupations you hope to have, quotes/shout outs, or silly things.
- PLEASE DO include: clubs/organizations/sports teams/community activities you participated in, awards/accolades/scholarships received.
- **If you have not taken a senior portrait, see the SHS librarians as soon as possible.**

Any questions related to your senior slide can also be directed to the SHS librarians (mmiear@saalem.k12.va.us and mmoore@saalem.k12.va.us).

Fill out the 2026 Graduation Survey here: [2026 Spartan Graduation Survey](#)

Career and Military Signing Day Event - Friday, May 22, 2026- 2:00 pm - SHS Auditorium

- Seniors may participate in this event if they already have jobs lined up for after high school or if they have enlisted in the military.
- In order to participate students must have filled out the Career Signing Day Survey found on the SHS website no later than Friday, May 8, 2026. The link is [2026 Career Signing Day Survey](#)

Community Scholarship Celebration, May 19, 2026

Community Scholarship Celebration - 5:15 pm - SHS Cafeteria/Auditorium

- Students receiving scholarships from the Salem Education Foundation and Salem Sports Foundation will be recognized and will receive those scholarships.
- Students who will be attending this event will be notified.
- If you have been invited, please complete the [2026 Community Scholarship Night RSVP](#) by Tuesday, May 12, 2026.
- **If you have been invited to this event, your attendance is expected and essential.**
- Parents and family members are also invited to attend this event.
- **Graduates will wear their caps and gowns to this event.**
- Hors d'oeuvres prepared by SHS Culinary Arts students will be served in the cafeteria at 5:15 pm.
- The ceremony begins promptly at 6:00 pm in the auditorium. Graduates will sit together on the right-hand side of the auditorium in seats that have been labeled with their names.
- Dessert and an opportunity for pictures taken by a photographer follow the ceremony.

Senior Picture and Grad Walk (ALMS, Elementary Schools, SHS) , Tuesday, May 26, 2026

To prepare for the Event:

*All Seniors must complete the required google form.

*Please bring your caps/gowns to wear during the Senior Group Photos and Walk.

*Anyone who plans to not attend will be expected to remain in class.

Schedule:

- 11:30am -12pm Seniors will eat lunch between 1st and 2nd lunch periods in the Gym.
- 12:00pm-12:10pm Drop off bookbags in auditorium- Dress in Cap & Gown (Students are NOT allowed to go to cars)
- 12:15- Load Buses
- 12:30pm-1:30 pm Seniors will be bussed to their Elementary Schools and Middle School to participate in a graduation walk.
- 1:45pm Return to SHS/ SHS Senior Walk
- 2:00pm Senior Picture in Large Gym
- 2:20 pm Seniors will be dismissed

Senior Families are invited to gather outside of SHS on the front side walks at 2:20pm to celebrate Seniors as they complete their walk.

Complete the Google Form to attend [2026 Senior Walk and Transportation Form](#) by **Friday, May 8, 2026**

Senior Day, Wednesday, May 27, 2026

Senior Breakfast - 8:45 am - SHS Cafeteria

- Seniors who have a first period class will report to first period and then be released to the cafeteria for the Senior Breakfast. Parents may join seniors for breakfast.

Senior Awards Assembly - 9:30 am - SHS Auditorium

- The entire senior class will attend this annual event.
- Many, but not all, seniors will be recognized at this event through the awarding of certain scholarships as well as awards from within the school.
- **Please complete the [2026 Spartan Graduation Survey](#) (see above) with any outside scholarships or awards you have received so we can properly recognize you at this event. This will NOT include scholarships presented at the Senior Community Awards Night (Salem Ed. Foundation). Do not assume we already know about these scholarships and awards. IF you do not share the information, it will not be announced.**
- Parents of seniors receiving awards will be notified by the School Counseling Office at least 1 week prior to the event, and parents and family members are invited to attend.
- Dress for this assembly is **Business Casual**.
- Students should not wear Twister costumes to the assembly. Students wearing Twister costumes (see below) will have time to change into costumes after the assembly.

Senior Twister, Games, Activities & Cookout - 11:30 am - SHS Gymnasium

- **Only students who sign up in advance may participate in this part of Senior Day. (FREE but MUST Sign up)**
- Students will have the opportunity to compete in Twister (teams of 4) & other games.
- Students competing in Twister are invited to compete in a costume contest with their team of 4. Dress up in themed costumes to be eligible for prizes! School appropriate please!
- Seniors wishing to participate in the Twister competition or to attend as a spectator and play other games must sign up at lunch the week of May 11-15. **Though there is no cost to participate or spectate, signing up in advance is required, so we have a lunch count.**

Senior Lunch - 12:30 pm - SHS Gymnasium

- After the Twister competition and games, there will be a senior lunch provided for all who have signed up to participate.
- Food will be cookout style. If you have dietary needs or restrictions, please email Ms. Hudson.

Early Dismissal for Seniors - after Twister/Games

- When the senior Twister games and related activities are finished, all seniors will be released early from school. This will likely be between 1:30-2pm.

Turning in Chromebooks and Chargers

Chromebooks Must Be Turned In Prior to Graduation

- Chromebook collection will take place all day in the IT Office, Room 2004, located in the Library from Monday, May 18, 2026-through the morning of graduation Friday, May 29, 2026.
 - There will NOT be someone to collect Chromebooks at graduation. They must be dropped off at Salem High School.
- As soon as you no longer need the Chromebook for school purposes, take both the Chromebook AND AC adapter to the IT Office.
- Fees:
 - Fees for Chromebooks AND/OR AC Adapters that are lost must be paid to the bookkeeper prior to graduation day.
 - Fee for lost Chromebooks is \$250.00.
 - Fee for lost AC Adapter is \$29.00.
 - If students pay for CBs/chargers, they need to bring the receipt with them to the IT Office when turning in their devices.
 - **Students who do not turn in or pay replacement fee for lost Chromebooks and / or AC Adapters prior to graduation will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.**

Graduation Day, Friday, May 29, 2026

All seniors **MUST** arrive at SHS between 8:15 am-8:30 am by School Bus or Personal Transportation.

If you need bus transportation to/from SHS, you must indicate on the [2026 Senior Walk and Transportation Form](#) (same link as above)

Breakfast - 8:30 am - SHS Cafeteria

- Casual Dress (Cap & Gown only needed at Graduation)
- Grab & go breakfast for all seniors

Departing by School Bus from SHS - 9:00 am

- Seniors will be required to ride the bus from SHS to the Civic Center for practice.

Graduation Practice - 9:15 am - Salem Civic Center

- **This is a *mandatory* event for all students participating in our commencement exercises.** Only members of the graduating class may attend graduation practice.
- Graduates will ALL be transported from SHS to the Salem Civic Center and back to school after practice.
- When you arrive at the Civic Center for practice, please enter through the front doors.
- Dress for graduation practice is casual. You do not need your cap and gown.
- At graduation practice we will run through the entire graduation ceremony.
- We will hand out gold honors tassels at graduation practice.
- **We want to make sure your name is pronounced properly at graduation. One reason we practice graduation is to practice**

reading out all names. If you think there is any chance your name might be pronounced incorrectly during the ceremony, please see Mr. Jamie Garst. He will be the one calling out names and appreciates your assistance. If you are unable to see him in person, please record your name being pronounced correctly and email that to jgarst@salem.k12.va.us

- After graduation practice, all graduates will be transported back to SHS.
- Graduates will need to return on their own to the Salem Civic Center Annex between 1:15 pm-1:30 pm. Plan accordingly for heavy traffic!

Commencement Exercises - May 29, 2026 - 2:00 pm - Salem Civic Center

If you do not intend to participate in this year's commencement exercises, please inform Mrs. Chitwood in our Counseling Office immediately.

Attire, Caps, and Gowns

- Graduates who are participating will be required to wear caps and gowns. Gowns should be zipped up.
- Seniors may tastefully and appropriately decorate their caps.
- The graduation cap should be parallel to the floor.
- Tassels should hang to the right until you are declared a graduate.
- Graduates must wear either dress pants/dress shirt/tie or a dress that does not hang below the gown. (Feel free to visit the Recharge Boutique at SHS if you're in need of appropriate attire.)
- If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Quesinberry (squesinberry@salem.k12.va.us) or Mrs. Dyer.

The Ceremony

- Preceding the graduation ceremony, students will be lining up in the Civic Center Annex.
- Parents can drop students off on either side of the Civic Center **no later than 1:30 pm**, and students can enter directly into the Annex. The Annex is located behind the main Civic Center floor, closer to the Red Sox Stadium.
- Tickets or reservations are not necessary for graduation. We do not limit the number of guests.
- **The graduation ceremony will be livestreamed on our SHS YouTube:**
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2vWClhrunzbfSHdCEpfmmQ>
- As your name is called at graduation, your picture and slide will be projected on a large screen behind the stage. See the section named Spartan Graduation Slide Survey above.
- Because "celebratory messes" from items like silly string create an incredible amount of work for our Civic Center staff to clean up, SHS graduates have not made such messes for many years. Showing love to our Civic Center staff in this manner is something we will continue this year.

Caps and Gowns

If you did not already order a cap and gown for graduation, please contact Jostens immediately. Their phone number is (800) 567-8367. Their website is <https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/customer/1119403/Salem-High-School/>

Yard Signs

Yard Signs will be available mid- late May. You will be notified via announcement when ready to pick up.

We are so excited to be a part of this important time in your life! Please let us know if you have questions.

Thank you,
Dr. Kelly Linkenhoker, Mrs. Anna Dyer and Mrs. Sarah Quesinberry

Senior Task Checklist

See details and due dates above. Some of the tasks may or may not pertain to all graduates.

- EVERYONE-Read letter above completely
- EVERYONE-Make Final Transcript requests
- Past Due- Order your Salem High School (Salem, Va) cap and gown
- Due Friday, May 8, 2026-EVERYONE- [2026 Spartan Graduation Survey](#)
- Due Friday, May 8, 2026-IF APPLICABLE- The link is [2026 Career Signing Day Survey](#)
- Due Friday, May 8, 2026- EVERYONE- Senior Walk/ Graduation Transportation Request [2026 Senior Walk and Transportation Form](#)
- Due Tuesday, May 12, 2026-IF APPLICABLE-Community Scholarship Celebration: If you have been invited, complete the [2026 Community Scholarship Night RSVP](#)
- Week of May 11-15, 2026- EVERYONE- Senior Day - Sign up during lunches
- Monday, May 18, 2026-through the morning of graduation Friday, May 29, 2026- EVERYONE-Turn in Chromebook
- EVERYONE READ- Secure graduation practice transportation to SHS from your home. All seniors MUST arrive at SHS between 8:15 am-8:30 am by School Bus or Personal Transportation. If you need bus transportation to/from SHS, you must fill out [2026 Senior Walk and Transportation Form](#) (completed above)