

2026 Valedictorian Nomination Information

What is a Valedictorian and who is a good candidate?

A **Valedictorian** is a student who is part of the graduating class who delivers the Valedictory Address at Commencement.

A **Valedictory Address** is generally considered the final farewell to classmates before they leave high school to pursue their individual paths after Commencement.

Any student who is part of the **graduating class** is eligible to run for Valedictorian. Students may apply in pairs, as long as the criteria below are met by BOTH candidates.

Candidates for Valedictorian must:

- ✓ have an **average of 80%** or higher in 6 Grade 12 Courses (approximate 2nd semester midterm marks + 1st semester final marks)
- ✓ be **well-rounded**, with involvement in school events and extracurriculars, and a good representation of the school in the wider community
- ✓ **represent the graduating class** well and can **positively reflect** on several aspects of what life at Saltfleet was like from the perspective of a student
- ✓ feel **comfortable speaking in front of a large audience**
- ✓ **not be returning** to Saltfleet next year

So you want to be Valedictorian? Here's what you need to do:

Record a short video (no longer than 3 minutes) to **introduce yourself** and **explain** why you are a good candidate for Valedictorian. If applying in a pair, both candidates must be in the same video.

Here are some things you could discuss:

- Why you are a well-rounded student and good representation of the Saltfleet graduating class
- Your leadership skills and how you contribute to the school and wider community
- A reflection on your time as a Saltfleet student
- Inspiring advice for your fellow graduates' future endeavours

All parts of your video must be school-appropriate!

Please be sure you are clearly SEEN and HEARD in your video. *Suggestions for a clear video:*

- Keep yourself centered in the shot
- Reduce background noise as much as possible
- No props, gimmicks, movement, or other distractions
- Speak slowly and include pauses between ideas
- Review your video to be sure your message is complete

How do I Submit my Video?

Your video must be uploaded to **OneDrive** with your **full name(s) and “Valedictorian Nomination Video” as the title** (e.g. Joe English Valedictorian Nomination Video).

Once uploaded, share your video with **Ms. Lindy Stewardson** (lsteward@hwdsb.on.ca) **AND Ms. Cristina Cerqueira-Smith** (ccerquei@hwdsb.on.ca). Make sure that you set the permissions to allow viewer access.

Nomination Videos are due by 11:59PM on Thursday April 30th, 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Next Steps:

- A staff committee will select 3-4 candidates based on the video submissions
- Successful candidates will be informed **via e-mail**.
- Successful candidates will then prepare a short speech that they will deliver live at the Commencement Breakfast in May. Instructions for this speech will be provided at a later date.
- Voting for Valedictorian will occur at Commencement Breakfast after the speeches. Students who are not present at Commencement Breakfast CANNOT vote.
- Votes will be tallied and taken into consideration by the Graduation Committee, who will make the final decision
- The Valedictorian(s) will be informed via e-mail and have until June to prepare the Valedictory Address for the Commencement Ceremony. The Valedictorian(s) will work with Ms. Stewardson and Ms. Cerqueira-Smith to edit, refine, and practice the Valedictory Address.
- If at any point through the selection process, candidates and/or the selected Valedictorian(s) violate school policies or codes of conduct (including suspensions and academic dishonesty) they will be disqualified.

Timeline for Submissions:

All deadlines are **FINAL** - late submissions will not be accepted

Date	What’s Happening?
Thursday April 30 th @ 11:59PM	Deadline for nomination video submissions.
Monday May 4 th	Selected candidates contacted via e-mail with instructions for next steps.
Thursday May 21 st @ 7:45AM	Commencement Breakfast. Candidate speeches will be delivered LIVE . Peer voting will occur immediately afterward.
Friday May 22 nd	The Valedictorian(s) will be contacted via e-mail with instructions for next steps.

Questions? Contact:

Ms. Lindy Stewardson (lsteward@hwdsb.on.ca) or in room 2012 periods 3 and 4

Ms. Cristina Cerqueira-Smith (ccerquei@hwdsb.on.ca) or in room 2011 period 3 or The Library period 4