

## Process Name: Special Events – School Dedications/Re-dedications

### Function: Communications and Community Engagement

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A school dedication can be a special event for students, staff and community members. This checklist will help you plan a school dedication/ribbon-cutting ceremony. This is your opportunity to celebrate and thank everyone – teachers, staff, parents, students, business partners, neighbors, and the construction team for their hard work and patience.

To make it an event of distinction, it is important to understand what the community expects and to create a ceremony that reflects those expectations; it can be a ceremony of setting expectations and of hope, it can be a ceremony of nostalgia for adults, it may be a time for students to create and announce a campus culture. Deer Valley's culture encourages these events to be community based, rather than paying homage to contractors or architects, politicians or civil servants.

Checklist for Dedication/Ribbon-Cutting Ceremonies	
<b>Select an event leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Select a point person to lead the event planning. This could be the principal, staff member or parent. Consider establishing a small committee involving your PTSA/PTSO members.</li><li>• Contact the Communications and Community Engagement Department, 5-5010 to discuss your preliminary plans and to reserve the giant scissors and ribbon.</li></ul>
<b>Select a date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Select a date at least four weeks in advance of the event.</li><li>• Before selecting a date –<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Confirm with your construction team that the facility will be presentable and near completion.</li><li>- Ensure the Superintendent is available to attend. For the Superintendent's calendar, contact the Superintendent Administrative Assistant, 5-5002.</li></ul></li><li>• 5 to 7 days before event, arrange a meeting with Communications and Community Engagement Department to review checklist and details</li></ul>
<b>Select a time/campus location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You will never find a perfect time. Try for the time that works best for those you consider most important to your event.</li><li>• Consider if you want parents to attend. Generally, ceremonies begin at 9:30 a.m. or 10 a.m. and are scheduled for 30 minutes. (Events held between 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. typically attract the most media</li></ul>

	<p>coverage). Later events are not always covered due to evening news deadlines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending on factors, it is preferred to hold the ceremony from later September until later November or prior to Spring Break and after Winter Break.</li> </ul>
<b>Invitations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Community Engagement will coordinate design, printing and mailing of formal invitations, combining guest lists (with full addresses provided) from the school, DO departments and the Superintendent's Office.</li> <li>Consider sending a "save the date" e-mail to special guests as soon as your date is scheduled.</li> <li>Invite parents of the school using the best identified communication methods which can include school electronic newsletter, principal letter, Connect-Ed notification system, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Who to invite</b>	<p><b><i>Please invite:</i></b></p> <p><b>District leaders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governing Board Members</li> <li>District Superintendent's Cabinet Team</li> <li>District Leadership Team</li> <li>Deer Valley Education Foundation Directors and Board Members</li> </ul> <p><b>Project partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General contractor</li> <li>Architect (ask your construction manager for names/addresses)</li> </ul> <p><b>School community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PTSA/PTSO and parents</li> <li>School staff</li> <li>Students</li> <li>Partners in Education</li> <li>Volunteers</li> <li>Neighbors</li> <li>City Councilmember, Congressperson, Senator, etc. (Names can be provided by Communications and Community Engagement)</li> <li>Feeder schools</li> </ul>
<b>Ceremony</b>	<p><b><i>Here is the order of a basic ceremony:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening welcome by principal</li> <li>Student-led pledge</li> <li>Thank you to special guests (Board Members, Superintendent, and/or City Councilmember, Congressperson, Senator)</li> <li>Student participation activity (song, reading, etc.)</li> <li>Principal introduces speakers</li> <li>Speakers (about 3 minutes each)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of dedication/ribbon-cutting</li> <li>• Closing remarks</li> <li>• Post-event activities (student-led tour, storyteller, refreshments, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request program sample templates from Communications and Community Engagement.</li> <li>• To have your program reviewed for accuracy and overall protocol, contact Communications and Community Engagement, 5-5010.</li> </ul>
<b>Speakers/VIPs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The principal serves as the emcee</li> <li>• Who should speak? It is appropriate to ask the following individuals to make a few comments in advance (Board President, Superintendent, and/or elected officials) in that order</li> <li>• Other guest speakers can be added as you deem appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Ribbon-cutting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan ahead when deciding who will cut the ribbon. Typically, “ribbon cutters” include principal, student(s), Board Members, Superintendent, and/or elected official if present.</li> <li>• The group gathers behind the ribbon (facing the audience) and poses for a photo. The principal starts a “countdown” with the students and then the group cuts the ribbon together.</li> <li>• To reserve the giant scissor and ribbon, contact Communications and Community Engagement, 5-5010.</li> </ul>
<b>Props/decorations/refreshments</b>	<p>Think about where you want to stage the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decorations – balloons, student artwork, flowers/plants, original building blueprint, etc.</li> <li>• Chairs (seating for guests and speakers)</li> <li>• Podium</li> <li>• Microphone</li> <li>• Flag for Pledge of Allegiance</li> <li>• Camera</li> <li>• Large scissors/ribbon</li> <li>• Optional refreshments (cake, cookies, punch, tea, water) preferably donated from school cafeteria or community organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Involving students</b>	<p>A few ways to involve your students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ushers for seating</li> <li>• Taking photos/video</li> <li>• Tour guides for the new building</li> <li>• Handing out programs</li> <li>• Choir or band performances</li> <li>• Creating thank you cards for attendees</li> <li>• Souvenirs created by students</li> </ul>
<b>Budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When planning your event, you may want to</li> </ul>

	consider how your community partners, PTSA/PTSO or local businesses can defray expenses.
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**Other Dedication Considerations:**

- Begin the planning process early to provide sufficient time to compile listing of community members who should be invited (HOA officers, police and fire departments, retirees, business partners, volunteers, etc.).
- Community should be included as much as possible in the ceremony, as we work to position our schools as the foundation of each community. This is a great opportunity to introduce the school and its students to the neighborhood.
- For the ceremony, create a VIP seating area for special guests, and the representatives of construction/design firms who participated in the project. Grouping these individuals in the same seating section will make it easier to recognize them during the ceremony while also conveying that we do consider them to be VIPs.
- The on-stage/up-front seating chart will be carefully developed depending on dignitaries and elected officials who intend on attending. Established political protocol dictates who should receive formal recognition, including speaking or sitting in a prominent location, at events of this nature.
- Board members, executive management team (superintendent and associates), highest-ranking elected officials, campus administration, student leader and parent group leader should be among those seated on stage.

**Communications and Community Engagement will:**

- Clear school-selected date with Cabinet/Superintendent.
- Work with campus to prepare comprehensive listing of individuals to invite, including community members, bond/budget committees, governmental officials, elected leadership and internal representatives.
- Coordinate design, print and mailing of formal invitations, combining guest lists from the school, DO departments and the Superintendent's Office.
- Provide invitation flyers for feeder schools. E-mail information to all staff, with instructions to department leaders to send those employees who are appropriate to attend.
- Work with principal to outline ceremony events to adhere to time (30 minutes) and tradition.
- Work with campus and Graphic Communications to design, print and pay for commemorative programs for the ceremony.
- Coordinate ceremony needs with other district departments.

- Coordinate RSVPs, providing the school with periodic updates as to VIPs who plan on attending (high-profile community members, elected officials, etc.).
- Assist principal in writing ceremony script to acknowledge contractor, architect, SFB and other organizations who contributed to project. These individuals may or may not have an opportunity to talk, depending on program.
- Serve as greeter as guests arrive, helping to seat (along with student ambassadors) elected officials and others who will sit on stage. Identify individuals for the principal to aid in introductions during ceremony.
- Notify press through Media Advisories and information on website.
- Take photographs during event to document/chronicle ceremony and sent to media contacts and school.
- Post photograph on school and district website, portal, Facebook and Twitter pages.