

Senior Honors/Commencement Ceremony

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

These honors recognize the seniors who are ranked, according to grade point averages, number one and number two in the graduating class. Duplicate awards are made in case of ties. The valedictorian and salutatorian will be decided using class rank at the end of the 8th semester. These students receive special recognition at the commencement ceremony. The top ranked student will serve as class valedictorian. The student ranked second will serve as class salutatorian.

All candidates for Valedictorian and Salutatorian must attend an accredited high school a minimum of seven (7) semesters. Candidates must also attend Southern Wells a minimum of four (4) semesters during grades 9-12. Candidates must also earn the Indiana Academic Honors or Technical Honors Diploma.

In addition to Valedictorian and Salutatorian, special recognition will be given to all graduating seniors at the commencement ceremony who complete their 8th semester above a 3.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. Distinctions will be made based upon the following:

3.5-3.74 gpa	Honors
3.75-3.99 gpa	High Honors
4.0 and above	Distinction

If a student takes a college course off Southern Wells' campus or with no association to Southern Wells and the course is being utilized to meet an Indiana graduation requirement, it WILL be factored into the student's grade point average. It will not be a weighted grade. If the off-campus/no association college course is an elective course not being used to meet an Indiana graduation requirement, it will NOT be factored into the student's grade point average.

Finally, if a student in his or her senior year fails to finish the school year in good standing due to poor attendance, suspension, expulsion, or personal conduct, he or she *may* lose the opportunity to be recognized for any and all senior honors. This includes but is not limited to: Valedictorian/Salutatorian, GPA distinction and honors, commencement ceremony participation, and departmental awards. These decisions will be made at the discretion of the administration. **Students who have not completed ALL state of Indiana graduation requirements will not participate in the commencement ceremony.**

Weighted Courses:

The following courses receive an extra weight when calculating a student's grade point average: AP English Literature and Composition, AP Calculus, AP U.S History, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, Advanced Composition, Anatomy and Physiology, Biology II, and Biology II: Botany/Zoology.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Foreign Exchange students are guests in our school for one year.

1. The exchange student must be a full year student in attendance on the first day of school and staying through the close of the school year.
2. The exchange student can enter as no greater than a junior. We do not allow exchange students to have senior status and participate in commencement. We classify exchange students as 9th, 10th, or 11th graders.
3. The exchange student needs to be highly proficient in English. This is a critical area for their immersion into our academic and social settings.
4. The exchange student needs to take a challenging academic schedule based on their prior academic experiences, and they are expected to perform with the same expectations as all students in our building.
5. The exchange student and host family are expected to follow all student handbook policies no different than our own local students. Particular attention needs to be placed on adherence to the Southern Wells attendance policy. Travel needs to be scheduled during our breaks/vacations and not during academic time.
6. We encourage our exchange students and their host families to get heavily involved in the school community. The best way for an exchange student to have a great experience is to be a highly engaged and involved student.
8. If accepted, we would need a copy of the student's high school transcript translated in English as well as defined dates of arrival and departure.
9. Southern Wells Junior - Senior High School will not issue an Honorary Diploma to exchange students.
10. Only those students who have or are on approved programs will be admitted to Southern Wells Junior - Senior High School.
11. Students will be placed in their appropriate grade levels by the school counselor according to age and past experiences. Final determinations are to be made by the principal.
12. For information regarding Foreign Exchange Student athletic eligibility see IHSAA regulations.

Graduating Junior Status Students

Any student who has the intent to graduate at the end of their junior year, must inform the guidance counselor by the end of their sophomore year. Activities traditionally for "seniors only" will be allowed for those juniors whose schedule meets the requirements of a senior status student.

Graduation Program and Rehearsal Expectations

A meeting will be held with all students who are scheduled to graduate the week after Spring Break. Students will receive a form outlining the expectations to participate in the graduation ceremony. A parent and the student must sign and return the form to the guidance office before they will be allowed to participate in the ceremony.