

## Will your graduation represent your school well?

Ensuring your graduation ceremony impresses visitors

*“And maybe that is why, even with the hassles and the costs, we keep having these ceremonies: so that we can remember that while the graduate did the work, they were never alone on the journey. While the student might feel done once the last paper is submitted, maybe it takes all the hoopla for everyone else to feel complete, to see the work of supporting their student completed.”*

Wendy Robinson  
insidehighered.com

Graduation needs to focus on the accomplishments of your graduates. But it is also when the largest number of happy people gather on your campus, so let's make sure they walk away impressed.

### **Make your campus sparkle**

Even old and tired buildings can be clean. If you can't afford great ongoing janitorial services, splurge and make it happen now. And for goodness sake, make sure the bathrooms have plenty of toilet paper.

### **Honor students**

Of course, you will be giving diplomas, but can you recognize students for other accomplishments large and small, serious and playful?

For A+ work: give awards that reinforce your mission and the culture you want to encourage on your campus. For example: if your school mission talks about educating the whole child think about giving an award to the student who models and encourages others to make healthy choices.

### **Help them succeed this one last time**

Students speaking and performing at graduations are important and wonderful. While you can't control every blip and hiccup, you can help their confidence by offering to practice with them, giving them tips, rehearsing in the space and with the microphones, etc.

What impression would you rather have the audience take home: "Wasn't the class president's speech sweet even if we couldn't understand many of the mumbled words?" or "Wasn't the class president's speech impressive?"

Psst... This applies to both elementary and high school graduations. Even simple participation can be executed poorly or well.

**Delegating:**

Cleaning can be delegated to nearly anyone. Thinking up appropriate acknowledgements can be done by a team member who "gets" your mission. Helping students prepare should be done by a teacher the student connects with--whether that is you or someone else.

**Binder tab:** May

**School size:** All

**Marketing process step:**

- 1) Who are we?
- 2) What do families want?
- 3) What needs to change?
- 4) How do we tell our community?
- 5) How do we track results?