

Homecoming 101

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE DHS HOMECOMING DANCE AND TIPS FOR HANDLING ALL THE HYPE

General Information

- Students generally attend the dance in groups, either co-ed or single-gender. Groups can include all "couples," or a few couples plus several singles, and it isn't necessary to have an even number of boys and girls.
- Boys generally wear nice pants, a dress shirt and tie. If your son wears a suit jacket/blazer, understand it will spend part of the evening on the gym floor and probably end up in the car of another driver☺ Girls normally wear nice, short dresses to the dance.
- It is common for upperclassmen to skip the dance altogether, but freshman and sophomores should be encouraged to go and stay as long as they are enjoying themselves. Many love the idea of getting dressed up and going to the dance together, where they can snap photos of their friends for all of those Instagram posts!
- Parents should talk with their kids about the night's rules: no drinking, curfew, and how they will handle a situation where they don't feel safe and need an out, which could include a phone call to you using an agreed-upon code word or phrase (e.g., "How is Duke [the family dog] feeling?"). This type of arrangement lets kids know that you will be there for them any time of day or night yet allows them to save face with their friends.
- Parents should try to limit the number of events in the evening, as teens will frequently want the activities to continue all night. Many groups go somewhere for food after the dance; however, it isn't necessary to go to picture-taking, the dance, dinner, a "fun" activity such as whirly ball, and have a sleepover. It gets too expensive and overwhelming! Parents should try not to overindulge their teens. It's NOT about who spends the most on a dress or whose parents can serve the most elaborate appetizers during pictures. It is about kids getting comfortable in social situations with the oversight of their parents.

Planning

- Students should make the evening's plans but parents should have veto power. Parents should not take over the event.
- If students are attending the dance as a couple, it is customary for boys to make the plans and pay for their dates and for each person to buy the other a corsage/boutonniere.
- Parents of boys in the same general social group often get together over

coffee and make sure everyone's on the same page with the evening's rules, such as curfews. Parents should make sure that restaurant and/or other post-dance reservations are confirmed and should communicate all information to the girls' parents.

Driving

- Parents of freshman should drive in carpools. (Party buses are not the norm for freshman.)
- When students attend the dance as couples, the boys' parents generally drive all segments of the evening. A chart of who is driving what segment is helpful to circulate to parents.

Photos

- It's typical for members of a group going to the dance to get together for photos at one of the teenager's homes. Parents (often accompanied by younger siblings) drive their teens to this home, take a multitude of group photos, and then may drive a handful of teens to the dance.
- If you are hosting photos at your house, don't get carried away providing food and drink. Just set out lots of small bottles of water, a dish of wrapped mints and a bowl of pretzels. Kids, especially freshmen, are too nervous to eat much of anything!

Teens Unsure About Attending

- Parents should encourage their teens to go to the dance with their friends even if they don't ask, or get asked by, someone. The dance is just a bunch of kids milling around in the gym--not all of them dance, all take pictures, and it's not really a date-oriented event.
- If your child decides not to go to the dance, it's not a big deal. Encourage him or her to get together that night with other friends who aren't going, so they don't feel left out.