

***Town of Weymouth
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Press Release

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Emery Estate chosen as off-campus location for Weymouth High School's junior prom, April 29

Plans to hold the prom at Emery were spearheaded by the high school's junior class officers with support from Mayor Hedlund and school officials.

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Weymouth, MA – Weymouth's Class of 2017 is making history as the first high school class to hold their junior prom off campus. Even more momentous, the students have selected the 24-acre Emery Estate for their first venue.

"I am excited to see this event happen," **said Mayor Robert Hedlund**. "The Emery Estate is a beautiful piece of open space. It should be enjoyed by the community, and this prom is a great way to do that."

"The Class of 2017 wanted an off-campus prom, but we also wanted to stay in Weymouth," **said Cody Moran, President of the Class of 2017**. "With the help of Town officials, Principal Havaland, and our faculty advisers, we figured out how to have a prom on the Emery lawn. I am very excited for Friday night!"

"None of us have done anything like this before," **explained Christian Squatrito, Vice President of the Class of 2017**. "We learned a lot from contacting vendors and applying for permits. This is an experience we can take with us as we move forward to college and careers. Friday will be a lot of fun. The Class of 2017 is making Weymouth history, and we're really excited about that."

"The magnificent open space of the Emery Estate with the Boston city view in the background will be a memorable venue for the Weymouth High School Class of 17 junior prom," said Patricia O'Leary, Chair of the Mayor's Emery Estate Advisory Committee. "Mayor Hedlund's approval of this event will showcase the grounds and increase public awareness and use of this town park."

A former single-family home, the Emery Estate was acquired for public open space back in 2011. The property had been owned by the Emery family since about 1916, and was purchased by the Town using \$1.9 million of Community Preservation Act funds. The grounds feature a five acre plateau atop King Oak Hill, panoramic views of the Boston skyline, and a three-story colonial home modeled on George Washington's Mount Vernon estate.

While the property's buildings are closed to the public, its sweeping grounds are regularly available for passive recreation. The estate has also hosted a number of intimate social events, such as wedding ceremonies and picnics with prior approval from former Mayor Susan Kay.

The junior prom will be an entirely new experience for Emery. All festivities will be held under a 6,000-square foot canopy located on the rear lawn. Restroom facilities will be provided by Elegant Restrooms of New Bedford, and a dance floor with DJ and lighting will be set up inside the canopy.

"This is a very ambitious undertaking for the students," **said Mayor Hedlund.** "They contacted rental companies, priced out all the equipment, and made every arrangement they could. Now we have the chance to show our support and really reward these kids for taking the initiative."

"I am proud of the students for the work they have done to ensure that the junior prom can be held at the Emery Estate," **said Weymouth High School's Principal Peter Haviland.** "Our students have been learning and experiencing the value of expressing their voice in a productive and collaborative manner throughout the past few years. When presented with the challenges related to hosting the prom at Emery, they exercised their voice by working with town officials, vendors, and their class advisors to make this happen. These are the kinds of experiences that help students develop a sense of ownership in our school and because of their success we continue to build a greater sense of pride throughout our school and community."

The junior prom will be held on this Friday, April 29, from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm and will be supervised by Weymouth High School teachers and chaperons. Students will be shuttled from the Chapman Middle School. Parents and families are invited to join students as they walk the red carpet to the buses.

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