

San Dieguito Union High School District

Graduation Ceremonies and Activities

BP 5127

Students

High school graduation ceremonies shall be held to recognize those students who have earned a diploma by successfully completing the required course of study, satisfying district standards, and passing any required assessments. The Governing Board believes that these students deserve the privilege of a public celebration that recognizes the significance of their achievement and encourages them to continue the pursuit of learning throughout their lives.

High school students who have passed a high school equivalency test or the California High School Proficiency Examination must also meet district graduation requirements in order to participate in graduation ceremonies.

Invocations, prayers, or benedictions shall not be included in graduation ceremonies. The school or district shall not sponsor other ceremonies or programs for graduates that include prayer.

Honors and Awards

The Superintendent or designee shall identify other school-sponsored awards which may be given during graduation exercises. A separate awards program may be held to recognize graduating students receiving other school and non-school awards.

Graduation Attire

The Superintendent or designee may require graduating students to wear ceremonial attire, such as cap and gown, at the ceremony.

Any graduating student who has completed basic training and is an active member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces may, at the student's option, wear a military dress uniform at the ceremony.

Students shall be permitted to wear tribal regalia or recognized objects of religious or cultural significance as an adornment to the customary ceremonial attire, as long as the adornment does not cause a substantial disruption of, or material interference with, the graduation ceremony.

Students who desire to wear such adornments shall seek permission from the Superintendent or designee at least 14 days before the graduation ceremony.

Disciplinary Considerations

Students are expected to comply with district and school policies, regulations, and rules throughout the school session, including during graduation and related events. Students shall not be denied the privilege of participating in graduation ceremonies and activities except as discipline in cases of serious misconduct. In no event shall a student be denied participation in graduation ceremonies unless the principal or designee has informed the student and the student's parents/guardians of the misconduct and has given them an opportunity to respond.

During the graduation ceremony, a student may be removed from the ceremony for conduct that is disruptive or that poses a risk to safety.

High school seniors shall be notified of this policy in advance, through the student handbook or other means.

The superintendent or designee will develop consistent promotion/graduation practices to honor students who have passed away with the goal to ensure that the student's life is honored while recognizing it is a special day focused on the students who are graduating. This guidance pertains to the memorialization of any deceased student regardless of the cause of death and only applies to situations where the student was a part of the graduating/promoting class at their most recent school of attendance and only if the former student's parents/guardians have expressed their consent.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35183.1 Graduation ceremonies; tribal regalia or recognized object of religious/cultural significance

35183.3 Graduation ceremonies; military dress uniforms

38119 Lease of personal property; caps and gowns

48904 Liability of parent or guardian; withholding of grades, diplomas, transcripts

51225.5 Honorary diplomas; foreign exchange students

51410-51413 Diplomas

COURT DECISIONS

Workman v. Greenwood Community School Corporation, (2010) Case No. 1:2010cv00293

Cole v. Oroville Union High School District, (2000, 9th Cir.) 228 F.3d 1092

Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe, (2000) 530 U.S. 290

Lee v. Weisman, (1992) 505 U.S. 577

Sands v. Morongo Unified School District, (1991) 53 Cal. 3d 863

Lemon v. Kurtzman, (1971) 403 U.S. 602

Management Resources:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Pupil Fees, Deposits and Other Charges, Fiscal Management Advisory 17-01, July 28, 2017

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, February 2003

WEB SITES

AASA The School Superintendents Association: <http://www.aasa.org>
Antidefamation League: <https://www.adl.org>
California Department of Education, High School: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs>
U.S. Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov>

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