

# **Santa Rosa City Schools**

## **Board Policy**

### **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 Board of Education believes that these students deserve a public celebration that recognizes the significance of their achievement and encourages them to continue the pursuit of learning throughout their lives.

(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination)

(cf. 6146.4 - Differential Graduation and Competency Standards for Students with Disabilities)

High school students who have passed the California High School Proficiency Examination or the General Education Development Test must also meet district graduation requirements in order to participate in graduation ceremonies.

(cf. 6146.2 - Certificate of Proficiency/High School Equivalency)

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**

If the district high school wishes to identify a student at commencement with the title of valedictorian or salutatorian, the student must meet the following definition:

Valedictorian: The student with the highest rank in the graduating class.

Salutatorian: The student with the second highest rank in the graduating class.

Each school shall clearly publicize the criteria for distinguishing this ranking.

A cumulative student ranking will be calculated for printing on student transcripts on the Friday closest to September 30th (for the previous spring semester) and the Friday closest to February 28th (for the previous fall semester).

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 nonschool awards.

(cf. 5126 - Awards for Achievement)

### Disciplinary Considerations

In order to encourage high standards of student conduct and behavior, the principal may deny a student the privilege of participating in graduation ceremonies and/or activities in accordance with school rules. School rules shall ensure that prior to denial of the privilege(s), the student, and where practicable their parent/guardian, is made aware of the grounds for such denial and that the student is given an opportunity to respond to the proposed denial. If privilege(s) are to be denied, the student and parent/guardian shall receive written notice of the denied privilege and the means whereby they may appeal this decision. Specific information regarding discipline and participation in the graduation ceremony is contained in Board policy 6145.

(cf. 5125.2 - Withholding Grades, Diploma or Transcripts)

(cf. 5144 - Discipline)

(cf. 6161.2 - Damaged or Lost Instructional Materials)

International exchange students may receive honorary diplomas during the graduation ceremony. (Education Code 51225.5)

(cf. 6145.6 - International Exchange)

### Graduation Attire

The Superintendent or designee may require graduating students to wear ceremonial attire, such as cap and gown, at the ceremony. Caps and gowns are to be a single color of the school site's choice.

(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)

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. (Education Code 35183.3)

Students shall be permitted to wear regalia of religious or cultural significance as long as the adornment does not cause a substantial disruption of, or material interference with, the graduation ceremony. (Education Code 35183.1)

Students who desire to wear such adornments shall seek permission from the principal at least seven (7) days before the graduation ceremony.

Legal Reference:

## EDUCATION CODE

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

51400-51403 Elementary school diploma

51410-51412 Diplomas

## COURT DECISIONS

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) 112 S.Ct. 2649

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

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

## Management Resources:

### CDE PROGRAM ADVISORIES

0615.89 Granting credit for passing GED, SPB:88/89-11

### WEB SITES

CDE: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

## Policy SANTA ROSA CITY SCHOOLS

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