

GRADUATION EXERCISES

FILE: IKFB

TITLE: Graduation

POLICY:

Students must meet high school diploma requirements or be receiving a Certificate of Completion in order to participate in any graduation exercises. Graduation exercises shall be considered school functions and shall be conducted under the school principal's direction.

- (1) "Graduation" as defined in this policy means the exercises for students meeting the credit requirements for earning a high school diploma or equivalent as delineated in Section 1003.4282, Florida Statutes and Section 1003.435, Florida Statute.
- (2) The principal is authorized to exclude prior to or during graduation exercises any student for misconduct or for refusing to follow established rules or procedures for graduation exercises set out by the High School Office yearly. The High School Office shall ensure that rules and procedures for graduation ceremonies are provided to students and published on the high schools' website.
- (3) School administrators may plan, schedule and conduct appropriate graduation exercises with the approval of the School Board of Orange County, Florida ("Board").
- (4) While elementary and middle schools may have ceremonies for students recognizing outstanding accomplishments, Graduation exercises may only be conducted by high schools, technical colleges and other alternative sites and programs in which students receive high school diplomas or equivalent.
- (5) Schools shall permit graduating students to lawfully wear the dress uniform of any of the Armed Forces of the United States or the State of Florida.

SPECIFIC AUTHORITY:

Sections 1001.32; 1003.4282; 1003.435; 1006.07; 1012.28; 1001.54; 1008.25, Florida Statutes; Florida Administrative Code Rule 6A-6.0201

TITLE: Student Graduation Speeches

POLICY:

School-sponsored graduation exercises are limited-purpose public fora where certain students are selected and permitted to give speeches addressing the graduating class. The students giving these speeches have the right to determine the content of the speeches.

Employees of the Board will not restrict the content of student graduation speeches, except with respect to unprotected speech.

- (1) Discrimination against a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject is prohibited.
- (2) Selection of student speakers for graduation exercises, including the selection of the valedictorian, the salutatorian, senior class president and student government association president shall be based on neutral criteria set forth in the Student Progression Plan.
- (3) Students may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech.
- (4) A student's graduation speech does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the Board or its employees. This disclaimer must be included on the graduation exercise program at all graduation events and any other event at which a student speaks publicly.
- (5) A student may not be restricted or prohibited from delivering a graduation speech by any employee of the Board without prior review and approval from the General Counsel or designee.
- (6) The form of the graduation speech, whether presented live or via pre-recorded video/audio, shall be uniform in each school's ceremony.

SPECIFIC AUTHORITY:

Sections 1002.206; 1006.07, Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

REVISED: 4/10/18; 4/28/2020; 6/23/2020