

Graduation Ceremonies And Activities

High school graduation ceremonies shall be held to recognize those students who have earned a diploma by successfully completing the required course of study and satisfying district standards. The Governing Board 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. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

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

Students who have passed the California High School Proficiency Examination and/or the General Education Development Test may 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.

(cf. 1330 - Use of School Facilities)

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

Honors and Awards

To honor superior academic achievement, graduation ceremonies shall include recognition of valedictorian(s) and salutatorian(s). Valedictorian(s) and salutatorian(s) shall be selected based on established criteria and procedures that use multiple measures of academic performance.

(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)

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.

(cf. 5126 - Awards for Achievement)

Conduct at Graduation Ceremonies

Any student participating in a graduation ceremony shall comply with district policies and regulations pertaining to student conduct.

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)

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

However, any graduating student who has completed basic training and is an active member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces may, at their option, wear their military dress uniform at the ceremony. (Education Code 35183.3)

Disciplinary Considerations

In order to, encourage high standards of student conduct and behavior, the Superintendent or designee may deny a student the privilege of participating in graduation ceremonies and/or activities in accordance with school rules.

Prior to denial of the privilege, the student, and where practicable their parent/guardian, shall be made aware of the grounds for such denial and shall be given an opportunity to respond. If a privilege is to be denied, the student and parent/guardian shall receive written notice of the denied privilege and the means whereby the student may appeal the decision.

(cf. 3515.4 – Recovery For Property Loss Or Damages)
(cf. 5125.2 - Withholding Grades, Diploma or Transcripts)
(cf. 5144 - Discipline)

The principal may deny a student the privilege of participating in graduation or promotion activities because of a failure to pay fines or damages or because of other misconduct, or serious violation as described in Education Code 48900.

(cf. 6161.2 - Damaged or Lost Instructional Materials)

Fresno Unified School District does not harass, intimidate, or discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ancestry, age, creed, religion, political affiliation, gender, gender identity or expression or genetic information, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, parental or marital status, military veteran status, or any other basis protected by law or regulation, in its educational program(s) or employment.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

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
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) 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:

WEB SITES

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

Policy FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: September 9, 1993 Fresno, California
revised: April 14, 1994
revised: January 11, 1996
revised: May 24, 2006
revised: January 16, 2019