

Students

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES AND ACTIVITIES

High school commencement ceremonies shall be held to recognize those students who have successfully completed the required course of study, satisfied district standards, passed any required assessments, and thereby earned the right to receive a diploma. 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. 3260 – Fees and Charges)

(cf. 6011 – Academic Standards)

(cf. 6143 – Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.1 – High School Graduation Requirements/Standards of Proficiency)

(cf. 6146.4) – Differential Graduation and Competency Standards for Individuals with Exceptional Needs)

(cf. 6162.52 – High School Examination)

Beginning with the Class of 2006, students who are to participate in the Orland Unified School District's high school commencement exercises, and receive a diploma (Level I), must have completed all coursework that is required for minimum graduation credit before the ceremony. In addition, students must have passed the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), or have been granted a waiver by the governing board. (For the classes of 2006 and 2007 only, SB 517 exempts students with disabilities from the requirement of passing the exam under certain circumstances.)

Students attending North Valley High School or the Orland Community Day School, and who complete all requirements for graduation may participate in a commencement ceremony held by the school which they attend.

Students not passing the CAHSEE, but meeting all other graduation requirements will receive a Certificate of Educational Completion (Level II). Students who have met the requirements for a Certificate of Educational Completion prior to the Commencement Ceremony qualify to participate in the Commencement Ceremony.

Identified special education students with an Individual Educational Plan who do not meet graduation requirements will qualify for a Certificate of Completion (Level III) by meeting the standards specified in his/her Plan. The Plan may include differential standards specifically designed for the student. If differential standards are specified on the Plan, those standards should be attainable by the student, yet represent a reasonable level of proficiency, which will enable the student to become a self-sufficient citizen. Those students who have met the requirements for a Certificate of Completion prior to

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the Commencement Ceremony qualify to participate in the Commencement Ceremony. All students with disabilities should have appropriate accommodations and modifications written into their IEP.

Since individual students learn and achieve at varying rates, it is understood that students will not all meet graduation standards within the same time frame. The District will provide students with the opportunity to receive a diploma or certificate at the end of each semester of the regular school year and at the end of the summer session.

If a student is unable to pass the CAHSEE for English/Language Arts or mathematics, school personnel will place the student in class(es) or program(s) where intervention will be provided.

At the discretion of the Superintendent or designee, a student who will complete graduation requirements during the summer may participate in the commencement exercises without receiving his/her diploma/certificate. When the requirements have been satisfied, a diploma/certificate shall be sent to the student.

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 commencement ceremonies.

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

The Superintendent and/or designee will be responsible for developing, implementing, and monitoring any necessary administrative procedures to implement this policy.

Invocations and/or benedictions shall not be included in commencement ceremonies. Ceremonies or programs involving prayer for graduates shall not be sponsored by the school or district.

(cf. 1330 – Use of School Facilities)

(cf. 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression: Publications Code)

Disciplinary Considerations

In order to encourage high standards of student conduct and behavior, the principal may deny the privilege of participating in commencement ceremonies and/or activities in accordance with school rules. School rules shall ensure that the student and parent/guardian receive written notice of the privilege(s) to be denied, the grounds for such denial and the means whereby a student may appeal this decision.

(cf. 5125.2 – Withholding grades, diploma or transcripts)
(cf. 5144 – Discipline)
(cf. 5145.6 – Parental Notification)
(cf. 6161.2 Damaged or Lost Instructional Materials)

Honors and Awards

To honor superior academic achievement commencement ceremonies shall include recognition of a valedictorian and salutatorian. The Superintendent or designee shall establish procedures that ensure a fair determination of the students who have achieved the highest grade point average in the graduating class. When a tie exists, the principal shall honor more than one valedictorian and/or salutatorian.

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

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

(cf. 5126)

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

(cf. 6145.6 – International Exchange)

Elementary/Middle School Promotion Exercises

The board desires that elementary and middle school provide age-appropriate exercises to recognize students who completed the school's course of study.

Legal Reference: EDUCATION CODE
 40014 *Lease of personal property; caps and gowns*
 48904 *Liability of parent or guardian; withholding grades, diplomas, transcripts*
 51225.5 *Honorary diplomas; foreign exchange students*
 51400-51403 *Elementary school diploma*
 51410 *Diplomas: no indication of intellectual classification*
 51411 *Residence as condition for graduation; prohibition*
 51412 *Standards of proficiency*
 Lee v. Weisman, (1992) 112 S. Ct. 2649
 Sands v. Morongo Unified School District (1991) 53 Cal. 3d 863
 Lemon v. Lutzman (1971) 403 U.S. 602

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Fowler v. Board of Education of the Hickory Administrative School Unit (1978) 448 f. Supp. 497

Mifflin County School District v. Stewart (PA. Cmwltth. 1986) 503 A.2d 1012, 30 Educ. L.R. 403

Jones v. Clear Creek Independent School District (1992, 5th Cir.) 977 f.2d 963

Harris v. Joint School District #241 (1994, 9th Cir.) No. 93-35839

Management Resources:

CDE Program Advisories

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

Policy Adopted: (5/06) 4/19/07