

GRADUATION CEREMONIES

The graduation or commencement ceremony is a time to celebrate the honors and achievements of the graduating class. The Board of Education will establish the date for graduation ceremonies, while the administration will determine the place and program details, including attire. Academic and other awards and scholarships may be presented along with diplomas. Speakers may be selected from among the graduating class or others.

Participation in the graduation ceremony and related activities will be predicated on satisfactory completion of all graduation requirements, or as otherwise described in this policy. Exceptions may be made under extraordinary circumstances with the permission of the Superintendent of Schools or designee.

The Board of Education recognizes the right of a student to participate in his/her high school graduation ceremony with his or her ninth grade cohort providing that the student has met all academic requirements required by the State for a diploma or exiting credential, as set forth below.

Students who have earned either a Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential (CDOS) or Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC) without meeting the requirements for a high school diploma by the time their ninth-grade cohort reaches graduation may, but are not required to, participate in that graduation ceremony and related activities.

Under this policy, a student shall be allowed to participate in only one graduation ceremony, upon earning either a CDOS/SACC or a high school diploma.

Students with disabilities who participate in graduation ceremonies without receiving a diploma are is entitled to continue their educational programs until their 22nd birthday, or until receipt of a Regents or local high school diploma, whichever comes first.

However, students may be denied participation in the graduation ceremony and related activities as a consequence of violations of the Code of Conduct. The Building Principal may set other rules and conditions for participation in in the graduation ceremony and related activities. All such rules will be provided to students and parents/guardians in advance. Students who have met the requirements for a diploma but are barred from participating in the graduation ceremony will be given their diplomas separately.

This policy shall not be construed to limit the authority of the administration to bar students from the graduation ceremony as a result of disciplinary action.

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 1st Reading: 01/02/2019

The Board directs the Superintendent to develop regulations/procedures to implement this policy to be adopted by the Board. The district will provide annual written notice to all students and their parents/guardians of the requirements of this policy and associated regulations.

Cross-ref: 4321, Programs for Students with Disabilities Under the IDEA and New York's Education Law Article 89
4321.9, Declassification of Students with Disabilities
4773, Diploma and Credential Options for Students with Disabilities

Ref: Education Law §3204(4-b)
8 NYCRR §§100.5; 100.6

GRADUATION CEREMONIES REGULATION

In accordance with applicable law and regulations, the School District may award one (1) or more of the following to students:

1. Regents Diploma;
2. Regents Diploma with Honors;
3. Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation;
4. Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation with Honors;
5. Annotation of Science and/or Math Mastery;
6. Career and Technical Endorsement;
7. Local Diploma;
8. Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential;
9. Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC).

The specific requirements necessary to achieve each such diploma and/or exiting credential are available on the School District's website. In accordance with the School District's Graduation requirements policy, the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, will develop regulations setting forth the diploma requirements. Participation in graduation exercises will be predicated on satisfactory completion of all graduation requirements necessary for a student to earn a diploma.

A student who has not met all of the graduation requirements for an appropriate diploma may attend the ceremony if the principal, in consultation with the child's guidance counselor and appropriate teacher(s), determines that there are extenuating circumstances (e.g. serious illness which incapacitated the student for an extended period late in the school year or a death in the immediate family). If the principal determines that there are extenuating circumstances, **all** of the following conditions must also be met:

1. The student is deficient in no more than one unit of study;
2. The student has submitted all required assignments and sat for all final examinations, if they are given; **and**
3. The student certifies that he/she is enrolled in summer courses that, if successfully completed by September 1 of the graduating year, will result in meeting all requirements for the appropriate diploma.

A student who has not met these requirements will not be allowed to participate in the High School graduation ceremony.

A student who has earned either a Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential (CDOS) or a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC), but not a high school diploma, shall be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and related activities of the student's graduating class.

The district shall retain a record of each student's ninth grade cohort. Each year, the High School Building Principal shall determine whether each student who entered ninth grade with the current year's graduating class is eligible to participate in that year's graduation ceremony, pursuant to state law, Board policy and this regulation.

During the school year in which the ninth grade cohort enters twelfth grade, the High School Building Principal shall submit to the Superintendent of Schools or designee the name(s) of all students who are on track and expected to earn either a CDOS or SACC, but not a Regents or local high school diploma, by the time of graduation.

For each student so identified, the Superintendent or designee shall ascertain whether the student wishes to participate in the graduation ceremonies and related activities of that year's graduating class by discussing the matter with the student and/or parent/guardian either in person, in writing, by telephone, or via email.

For any student who meets such requirements and wishes to participate in the graduation ceremony and related activities, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure, prior to graduation, that the High School Building Principal, the student, and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified that the student may participate in that year's graduation ceremony and related activities, and shall ensure his/her participation is facilitated.

The district shall provide annual written notice to all students and their parents/guardians of the requirements of this regulation and associated policy.