

GRADUATION CEREMONIES AND ACTIVITIES

High school graduation ceremonies shall be held to recognize those students who have successfully completed the required course of study, passed all proficiency standards, and thereby earned the right to receive a diploma. The Board of Trustees 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.

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

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

Disciplinary Considerations

While recognizing the importance of graduation ceremonies, the Board also desires to maintain high standards of student conduct and behavior. Graduation ceremonies are offered for students in good standing. The principal may deny the privilege of participating in these ceremonies in accordance with school rules which provide for due process.

Honors and Awards

The valedictorians of each high school's graduating class shall be all the students with cumulative grade point averages of 4.0 or higher, based on all courses taken, except physical education courses. The valedictorian GPA calculation shall include twelve week progress reports issued in the second semester of their twelfth grade year. Students are responsible to verify the accuracy of their academic records and to report any errors to the school administration for resolution within ten days following the posting of twelve week grades.

Each high school will identify and recognize a "Scholar of Scholars" who will be the student with the highest overall weighted grade point average based only upon coursework in the following academic disciplines: English, History/Social Science, Mathematics, Science, and Foreign Language, as well as all Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate courses. Transferable college-level coursework taken as part of concurrent enrollment will also be used to identify the "Scholar of Scholars." This "Scholar of Scholars" will be given the opportunity to speak at graduation ceremonies.

In the event of a tie, the student who has taken the most honors level and/or advanced placement courses will be the "Scholar of Scholars."

If a tie still exists, the student who has earned the most credits will be selected. If still tied, the student with the highest SAT scores will be selected.

GRADUATION CEREMONIES AND ACTIVITIES (continued)

Each high school principal and/or graduation committee may identify other school-sponsored awards which may be given out during graduation exercises. A separate awards program may be held to recognize graduating students receiving other school and non-school awards.

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

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

40014 *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 *Diplomas: no indication of intellectual classification*

51411 *Residence as condition for graduation; prohibition*

51412 *Standards of proficiency*

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

Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971) 403 US 602

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

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

Management Resources:

CDE PROGRAM ADVISORIES

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

Policy
adopted: August 18, 1997
revised: June 12, 2000
revised: August 13, 2001
revised: February 28, 2018

CAPISTRANO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
San Juan Capistrano, California