

SITE OPERATIONS CIRCULAR NO. 2005

Office of Leadership & Learning

SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Date: November 25, 2020

To: Senior High School Principals and Vice Principals; Area Superintendents

Subject: STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT AND OTHER SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Department and/or Persons Concerned: Senior High School Principals, Vice Principals, Counselors, Area Superintendents, and High School Registrars

References: Administrative Procedure 4770
Administrative Procedure 4710
AB 1248

DUE DATE: September through June

Action Requested: Review timelines and protocols, implement and communicate to students/families

Brief Explanation:

This circular provides clear and consistent expectations for participation of seniors in commencement and other senior activities for 2020-2021 school year.

General Overview

Per Administrative Procedure 4770, section D.11 (a.) “As a representative of the Board of Education, the principal shall designate those individuals who may participate in commencement ceremonies, approve the content of the program, and make all related decisions. Student participation is not required, but every eligible graduate who wishes to participate must adhere to the principal and school commencement ceremony rules if participation is to be approved. Any student who agrees to be a participant and then fails to follow the principal’s direction is subject to disciplinary action.” Administrative Procedure 4770 addresses the following specific requirements for participation in commencement activities:

- Attain a cumulative weighted grade point average (WGPA) of 2.0 or higher in grades 9-12
- Earn a minimum of 44 semester credits
- Meet district adopted UC “a-g” graduation requirements
- Maintain a minimum of 2.0 in citizenship (Admin Procedure 4710) based on quarter one (Q1), quarter 2 (Q2), and quarter three (Q3), and the grading period prior to graduation:
 - No five-day suspensions and/or zero tolerance infractions during senior year (unless cleared by School Site Appeal Committee)

- Seniors may be denied participation in commencement ceremony (and other senior activities) for suspensions of fewer than five days during their senior year, at the discretion of the principal
- Decisions of the School Site Appeal Committee are final
- Students with disabilities receiving special education service may be exempt from this requirement [For more information, refer to AP 4770, section D.14.b. (2).].

Site Responsibilities

In the interest of ensuring equity for all SDUSD students, it is important for sites across all district school sites to have clear and consistent expectations for student conduct and behavior as they relate to participation in commencement and other senior activities such as prom and senior breakfast:

To Earn a Diploma	To Walk in Graduation	To attend prom and other senior activities
44 semester credits in required courses	Meet the expectations for a diploma or certificate of completion	Meet the expectations for a diploma or certificate of completion
Meet district adopted UC “a-g” graduation requirements	Clear semester I and II attendance (absences and tardies) three weeks before school is dismissed For the 2020-21 school year, only this requirement will be suspended due to attendance taking procedures during the pandemic.	Clear semester I and II attendance (absences and tardies) three weeks before school is dismissed For the 2020-21 school year, only this requirement will be suspended due to attendance taking procedures during the pandemic.
Maintain an overall academic WGPA of 2.0 or higher in grades 9-12	Maintain a minimum 2.0 in citizenship (right to be cleared to walk by site appeal committee)	Have no attendance issues the last three weeks of school For the 2020-21 school year, only this requirement will be suspended due to attendance taking procedures during the pandemic.
	No suspensions in the second semester (right to be cleared to walk by site appeal committee)	Maintain a minimum 2.0 in citizenship (right to be cleared to walk by site appeal committee)
	No five-day suspensions during the school year	No suspensions in Q3 or Q4 (right to be cleared to walk by site appeal committee)
	No involvement in senior pranks	No five-day suspensions during the school year
	Complete any iHigh courses needed to meet graduation requirements by June 9, 2021.	No involvement in senior pranks

Note: Bold = Required in AP 4770

Approved Graduation Attire Beyond Cap & Gown:

- 1) Academic Distinction: Cords or Tassels
- 2) CSF Cords
- 3) Traditional tribal regalia or recognized objects of religious or cultural significance as an adornment
- 4) On-Campus Site Approved Club & Organizations: Cords, Pins, Sashes (i.e. ASB, JROTC)

In order to be fair to students and families, district graduation requirements as well as site-specific requirements must be clearly and consistently articulated to all students and parents with sufficient opportunity for remediation, when possible. It is the responsibility of the site administrators to keep parents informed in a timely manner so that family disappointments are avoidable whenever possible.

To ensure that expectations for students are clear and consistent the following timeline is encouraged:

September-December:

- Principals or vice principals should discuss expectations/requirements directly with all seniors in a general meeting
- Principals or vice principals should discuss expectations/requirements directly with all parents/guardians of seniors in a general meeting, preferably at Open House
- A letter should be sent home with seniors for parents/guardians signature (with accompanying auto-dialer phone message and email to parents)

January-February:

- Signed letters (by parents/guardians) should be collected and placed in a binder in site office. Site administrators should communicate with parents for letters not returned
- Periodic follow-up auto-dialer phone messages and emails should be sent to parents. (The current auto-dialer system logs all calls and emails so site administrators can see who has received the information and “follow-up” with parents not contacted.) Site should document “follow-up” communication with log of dates and persons contacted

March-April

- Select staff to sit on committee to review appeals and schedule appeal dates

May-June

- Make final decision(s) on which student(s) will not participate in senior activities and/or commencement.

High expectations for appropriate student conduct are not only fair but also reasonable if students are to be prepared as responsible citizens who understand consequences for irresponsible and inappropriate behavior. It is also appropriate that students and their families be given every opportunity to meet these expectations by making the requirements clear and consistent from the beginning of the school year.

For additional information, contact Operations Specialist Veronica Ortega (vortegal@sandi.net), Office of Leadership & Learning

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APPROVED:

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