

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/DIPLOMAS/COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES**

### **Background**

The School Board is responsible, under applicable law and regulations, to adopt graduation requirements, including satisfactory completion of required courses and projects, and the results of local or state assessments. The Board acknowledges each student's successful completion of an instructional program appropriate to the student's interests and needs by awarding a diploma at commencement ceremonies. Participation in commencement ceremonies is a privilege, not a right, and is limited to those students who have completed all elements of the educational program as described in this policy, and who have complied with the District's Student Code of Conduct and other school rules and policies.

### **Objective**

It is the objective of this policy to specify and communicate the requirements for graduation, receipt of a diploma and for participation in commencement ceremonies.

### **Policy**

The Board shall award a high school diploma to every student enrolled in this District who meets the requirements of graduation established by this Board as part of the District's Strategic Plan.

There shall be only one type of diploma awarded by this District and no distinctions shall be made between various programs of instruction.

A requirement for graduation shall be the completion of work and studies representing the instructional program assigned to grades 9 through 12, which are aligned to established academic standards.

The Board shall identify the planned courses which are required for graduation. These written plans shall be on file in the District and shall be made available upon request for review by the designated representatives of the Department of Education.

The Board requires that each candidate for graduation shall have earned the number and types of credits specified by the Board each year.

The number of credits or courses required for graduation may be revised from time to time, and such revisions shall apply to students currently attending the high school as well as future high school students. (Students and parents/guardians are referred to the graduation requirements/course offerings as approved by the Board from time to time for more details.)

Students who have not fully completed all of the graduation requirements will not graduate, receive a diploma or participate in commencement, except certain students with disabilities who may participate in commencement as provided below.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for planning and executing graduation ceremonies that appropriately recognize this important achievement, which shall include the preparation of suitable diplomas for graduating students.

Accurate recording of each student's achievement of academic standards shall be maintained, as required by law and state regulations.

Students shall be informed of graduation requirements they are required to complete, and periodic warnings shall be issued to students in danger of not fulfilling graduation requirements.

A student who has completed the requirements for graduation shall not be denied a diploma as a disciplinary measure, but the student (including students with disabilities as addressed below) may be denied participation in the commencement ceremony where the student has violated the Student Code of Conduct or other school rules or District policy and where such violation is serious enough, as determined by the District, to warrant such denial. Such exclusion shall be regarded as a school suspension.

#### Diplomas for Eligible Veterans

In order to honor and recognize eligible veterans who left high school prior to graduation to serve in World War II or the Korean War, the Board shall grant a diploma to a veteran who meets the applicable requirements of law and completes the required application.

Upon proper application, the Board may award a diploma posthumously to a veteran who meets the stated requirements.

The Superintendent shall submit to the Board for its approval the names of veterans of World War II and the Korean War who are eligible for a high school diploma.

#### Students With Disabilities

A student with a disability who satisfactorily completes a special education program developed by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or otherwise meets requirements of 22 Pa. Code Ch. 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment), but whose IEP prescribes continued education after the fourth year of high school may participate in the graduation ceremony of the student's high school graduating class and receive a certificate of attendance. Continued education includes regular education, special education, transition planning, transition services or related services. This District shall provide timely and meaningful written notice to students

with disabilities and their parents or guardians, which notice shall also require a reasonably prompt response from the student and parents/guardians as to whether they elect to participate in commencement that year.

Each student may participate in only a single commencement ceremony.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to preclude receipt of a diploma at a later date if the student with a disability satisfactorily completes a special education program developed by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or who otherwise meets requirements of 22 Pa. Code Ch. 4.

### **Administrative Responsibility**

It shall be the responsibility of the Administration to implement and enforce this policy, and to develop Administrative Procedures for implementation and enforcement where necessary.

### **Communication**

1. All District Staff
2. All high school students and parents/guardians
3. The Mt. Lebanon Community

Adopted February 18, 2002  
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