

510.00.02 PROCEDURE FOR IDENTITY ADORNMENTS WORN AT GRADUATIONS

Graduating seniors, who wish to wear individually chosen ethnic, cultural, and identity adornments (identity adornments) at their graduation ceremony, must follow the procedure below.

A. General requirements for wearing identity adornments

1. The identity adornment must meet the required physical dimensions and characteristics as listed in Section B below.
2. The adornment must receive pre-approval from designated school personnel. See Section C below for more information on the process for pre-approval.
3. Day/evening of graduation ceremony
 - The pre-approval tag provided by the school must be attached to the identity adornment on the day/evening of the graduation ceremony and remain attached throughout the ceremony.
 - The request to wear an adornment can be denied if it no longer meets the physical dimensions and characteristic requirements as described in Section B. If that happens, the student will not be allowed to wear the garment.
 - No approvals will be given for adornments the day/evening of the graduation event. Adornments must receive pre-approval.
4. The costs of identity adornments are the responsibility of the individual student and their family.

B. Adornments must meet the following physical dimensions and characteristics:

- Adornments may be worn around the neck or attached to one's graduation gown.
- Total length: 64 inches or less
- Width: 7 inches or less
- No reflective materials, such as sequins or glitter.
- No offensive messaging as defined in the dress code section of the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook including: items that pose a health or safety hazard, obscene, sexually explicit, discriminatory, racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory, displays or references to alcohol, tobacco, or other products that are illegal for use by minors.
- No references to gang affiliations, firearms, or violence.
- No oversized words; each character cannot be larger than 1.5 inches tall or wide.
- Scented items are not allowed, so as not to cause a distraction or imposition for other graduation participants, including those with allergies or sensitivities. Artificial flowers should be used instead of real flowers.
- Items that threaten the dignity of the ceremony will not be approved. The school's approver(s) has discretion to determine whether or not an item meets this requirement.

- Personal identity adornments of the graduation cap will not be allowed, including tassels or decorating the mortarboard. This procedure does not limit wearing cap adornments that are sponsored or organized by the district or school.

C. Pre-approval process for identity adornments

1. Each school must establish a process and timing for approval of identity adornments. This process should include the following:
 - a. Communications regarding the opportunity to wear identity adornments.
 - b. Communications regarding timing of approvals, as well dimensions and characteristics of adornments that must be met. (See Section B.)
 - c. Multiple days and varying times for receiving pre-approval.
 - d. Designation of the person who will be reviewing and providing pre-approval, such as the school's graduation coordinator.
 - e. Designation of the person to whom the student can appeal a decision by the primary approver, such as the school's principal, and the amount of time that person has to make a decision on the appeal.
 - i. A principal may also forward questions or appeals to the District's graduation planning committee for a decision.
 - ii. The District's graduation planning committee may forward questions or appeals to the Assistant Superintendent for high schools. The decision made by him or her will be final. .
 - f. A method for designating that an item has been pre-approved, such as a tag that can be attached to the adornment.
2. All parties involved in the pre-approval process are reminded to please be mindful of the significance of these items. Some of these adornments are sacred items in particular cultures; therefore, guidance from the student should be sought prior to handling the adornment.

CROSS REFERENCE:

SPPS Rights and Responsibilities Handbook
Policy 510.00 - Graduation
Policy 101.00 – Racial Equity

LEGAL REFERENCES: