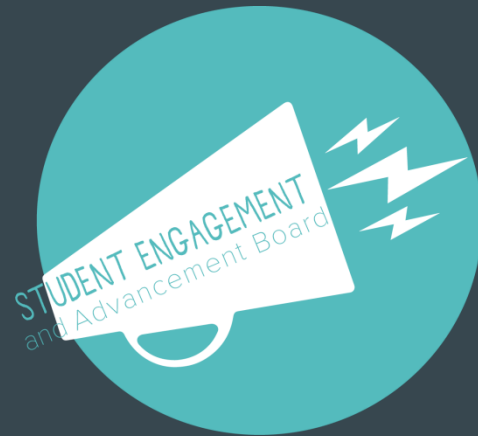


Student Engagement and Advancement Board

Expanding Inclusivity



Recommended Updates to
Graduation Attire Policy & Procedure

Purpose

Propose a plan for expanding inclusivity in SPPS by updating existing graduation attire policy



Board Policy 510.5: Graduation (Attire)

“Participants in graduation exercises shall be required to wear caps and gowns for the exercises (unless the Superintendent waives the requirement). During commencement exercises, graduating students shall not carry items or otherwise alter the cap and gown (exemptions must be approved by the Superintendent).”



Recommendation 1: Align Policy

Cross-reference the Graduation Attire Policy with the:

- Gender Inclusion Policy
- Racial Equity Policy
- Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy

Board Policy 500.00: Gender Inclusion

“Within academic programming, prohibit the separation of students and/or curricular materials based upon gender unless it serves as a compelling pedagogical tool.”



Board Policy 101.00: Racial Equity

“SPPS acknowledges that complex societal and historical factors contribute to the inequity within our school district. Nonetheless, rather than perpetuating the resulting disparities, SPPS must address and overcome this inequity and institutional racism”



Board Policy 102.00: Equal Opportunity / Non-Discrimination

“Saint Paul Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, sex, marital status, national origin, immigration status, age, color, religion, ancestry, status with regard to public assistance, socio-economic status, sexual or affectional orientation, gender identity and expression, familial status, physical appearance or disability. Saint Paul Public Schools also makes reasonable accommodation to the known disabilities of qualified disabled individuals. This policy applies to all areas of education.”



Recommendation 2: Support Policy with Procedure

Administration implement a procedure for the Graduation Attire Policy that supports students in honoring their graduation by representing their ethnic identities

The procedure should:

- Include a strategy for transparency so students and staff have the same information
- Include support for schools and programs to honor students with non-academic recognitions
- Include a process for district-wide approval of non-academic recognitions

The procedure should:

- Resist strict limits on what an ethnic cultural expression is
- Resist a process that puts the work on students to request that their cultural traditions be recognized
- Include a strategy for consistent implementation
- Include information for staff about appropriate interaction with cultural items



Recommendation 3: Consistent Communication

Administration support policy and procedure by implementing a standard paragraph for communications to: administrators, graduation coordinators, students and families.

The paragraph should:

- Provide detailed information on the approved procedure
- Encourage (not provide permission for) expression of ethnic traditions/identity at graduation
- Provide a definition of ethnicity
- Provide protections against cultural appropriation



Recommendation 4: Update Policy for Inclusivity

Update the SPPS Board Policy 510.5 to state:

SPPS encourages the expression of students ethnic traditions at graduation through wearing of visual representations of their culture

