

## **Graduation Exercises**

The Board of Education (the “Board”) for Mapleton Public Schools (the “District”) believes that completion of the requirements for a high school diploma is an achievement that deserves recognition. Accordingly, the Board will recognize each graduating senior's accomplishment in a publicly-celebrated graduation exercise.

Although senior class members may be asked to pay fees to defray graduation expenses, no student shall be barred from participating in the exercises because of inability to pay the fees.

The program for graduation exercises will be secular in nature and neutral with respect to religious expressions by students. The program will not include any school or district-sponsored prayers or other religious activities.

### **Student Participation in Graduation Exercises and Activities**

A student who is deficient of credits necessary for graduation may not participate in graduation activities.

Year-end and mid-year graduates are eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies if the following requirements are met:

1. The graduate attends graduation rehearsals;
2. The graduate has paid all outstanding fees unless otherwise waived by the school director (or designee) due to financial hardship;
3. The graduate has returned or replaced all District-owned property;
4. The graduate is measured for a cap and gown by the designated time; and,
5. The graduate complies with all District policies, rules, and regulations.

Diplomas shall be issued to mid-year graduates only during or following the end-of-the-year graduation ceremony. Mid-year graduates shall be eligible to attend the senior breakfast, the junior-senior prom, and other senior week activities unless the school director or school director's designee determines that the mid-year graduate has failed to comply with this policy, and/or other district policies, rules, and regulations.

### **Cultural Adornments of Graduation Regalia**

Graduating students are expected to wear the attire customarily worn for the graduation

ceremony at their school, with the specific exceptions outlined below.

A student may adorn the cap, gown, or stole customarily worn at their school with traditional objects of tribal regalia and/or objects of cultural or religious significance. Adornments are something worn in addition to, but not replacing, graduation attire. Tribal regalia or objects of cultural or religious significance means formal attire used in recognized practices and traditions of a certain group of people.

Students may be required to request permission to wear an adornment in advance, and the district reserves the right to prohibit any adornments that are obscene, defamatory, fraudulent, profane, threatening, inappropriate, or disruptive or violate the dress code in any other manner. If it is determined that the adornment would cause a substantial disruption based on reliable evidence, the student's request may be denied. Students who wear adornments that have not been approved may be required to remove the adornment if the adornment is substantially disruptive.

### **Other Adornments of Graduation Regalia**

Mapleton graduates are allowed to decorate the tops of their mortarboard (caps) for the following purposes (or similar and approved purposes):

- To thank a family member (parent, sibling, grandparent, etc.) teacher, or friend.
- To recognize the college or university they will be attending.
- To display their graduation year.
- To recognize the branch of the military they will be joining.
- To display their home state or country's flag.
- To express a goal, emotion, or personal characteristic.
- To identify as part of a group, team, or activity.
- To display an intended college major.
- To highlight a formative experience.
- To express an inspirational message.

Mortarboard decorating is optional, and it is perfectly fine for students NOT to decorate their caps.

All mortarboard decoration must follow these rules:

- No advertisement, symbols, abbreviations, initials, words, slogans, patches, or pictures that:
  - Refer to drugs or controlled substances, tobacco, alcohol, weapons, or anything of a sexual nature.
  - Denote an affiliation with gangs or advocate drug use, violence, illegal activity, or disruptive behavior.

- Are obscene, profane, vulgar, or lewd.
  - Express animosity toward or against a person or a group of people.
  - Threaten the safety or welfare of any person.
- Only the flat, top area of the mortarboard may be decorated.
  - There may be nothing hanging down from any of the sides of the cap or protruding beyond the edges.
  - Decorations must be flat on the surface of the cap. Three-dimensional items are prohibited.
- Decorations must not make noise (bells, whistles, etc.)

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list, and any adornment or message deemed inappropriate or determined to pose a safety risk or distraction will not be permitted. School principals will have the authority to interpret these rules and disallow anything that they consider inappropriate for the commencement ceremony.

### **Baccalaureate Services**

Groups composed of interested students and their families may plan and organize baccalaureate services that are religious in nature. However, the school district will not be identified, explicitly or implicitly, as sponsoring or endorsing such services. Attendance at such services will be entirely voluntary with students and school personnel acting as private individuals.

School district funds, including paid staff time, will not be used for baccalaureate services. Groups planning baccalaureate services may rent and use school facilities under the terms, conditions, and rates prescribed by the district.

*Adopted 1971, by the Board of Education for Mapleton Public Schools.*

*Revised November 19, 1985, February 27, 2001, February 24, 2004, March 19, 2019.*

*Revised October 23, 2024.*

### **LEGAL REFERENCES:**

C.R.S. 22-1-142.5 (students are permitted to wear recognized objects of cultural or religious significance at graduation that are not substantially disruptive)

### **CROSS REFERENCES:**

KF: Community Use of School Facilities