

Great Falls School District

INSTRUCTION

2333

Participation in Commencement Exercises

Statement of Policy

A student's right to participate in a commencement exercise of the High School graduating class is an honor. As such, participation in this ceremony is reserved for those members of the graduating class who have completed all of the state and local requirements for graduation and are in good standing before the date of the ceremony. Students who complete their requirements after the date of commencement exercises will receive their diploma at the time of completion. Students who violate the District's discipline policy may be prohibited from participating in commencement exercises.

Organization and Content of Commencement Exercises

The school district will permit students to honor their Indigenous heritage through the display of culturally significant tribal regalia at commencement ceremonies. Any item that promotes drug use, weapon use, threats of violence, sexual harassment, bullying, or other intimidation, or violates another district policy, state, or federal law may not be worn during graduation.

The school administration may invite graduating students to participate in high school graduation exercises according to academic class standing or class officer status. Any student who, because of academic class standing, is requested to participate may choose to decline the invitation.

Students may participate in the graduation exercises of the High School they are enrolled in during the last semester preceding graduation.

The school administrators will review presentations and specific content, and may advise participants about appropriate language for the audience and occasion. Students selected to participate may choose to deliver an address, poem, reading, song, musical presentation, or any other pronouncement of their choosing.

The printed program for a commencement exercise will include the following paragraphs:

- Any presentation by participants of graduation exercises is the private expression of an individual participant and does not necessarily reflect any official position of the District, its Board, administration, or employees, nor does it necessarily indicate the views of any other graduates.
- The Board recognizes that at graduation time and throughout the course of the educational process, there will be instances when religious values, religious practices, and religious persons will have some interaction with the public schools and students. The Board, while not endorsing any religion, recognizes the rights of individuals to have the freedom to express their individual political, social, or religious views.

Cross Reference:

Policy 2410

High School Graduation Requirements

Policy 2410R

Publication of Graduation Requirements

Legal Reference:

Art. II, Sec. 5, Montana Constitution

Freedom of Religion

Art. X, Sec. 1(2), Montana Constitution

Educational Goals and Duties

Art. X, Sec. 7, Montana Constitution

Nondiscrimination in Education

§ 20-5-201(3), MCA

Duties and Sanctions

§ 20-1-308, MCA

Religious Instruction Released Time Program

§ 20-7-112, MCA

Sectarian Publications Prohibited and Prayer

Permitted

§ 2-1-315, MCA

Tribal Regalia and Objects of Cultural Significance-

Allowed at Public Events

Policy History:

Adopted on:

November 27, 2017

Revised on:

May 12, 2025