

**Administrative Procedures for Policy 3310 (Students)
Regarding Graduation Exercises**

I. Purpose and Authority

- A. The Board of Education of Calvert County (CCPS) recognizes graduation exercises as an important milestone in the educational process. These procedures establish expectations for participation, student conduct, recognition, attire, and ceremony administration to ensure graduation exercises remain dignified, meaningful, and consistent across all high schools.

II. Eligibility for Participation in Graduation

A. Diploma Requirements

- 1. Maryland High School Diplomas will be awarded to those students who have met all state and local requirements by that date.
- 2. Students who have not met the requirements shall not participate in graduation exercises.
- 3. Participation in graduation exercises is at the discretion of the Calvert County Board of Education.

B. School Obligations and Discipline

- 1. Each student must satisfy all school obligations prior to participation.
- 2. Students under suspension or expulsion at the time of graduation exercises shall not participate in graduation exercises.
- 3. Participation in graduation exercises is an opportunity and not a protected right and may be denied for failure to comply with participation standards.

C. Practice and Attendance Requirements

- 1. Students must participate in all required practices unless excused by the principal or his/her designee in advance of the practice.
- 2. Students must participate in the entire graduation exercise.
- 3. Early departures are prohibited without permission from the school principal.
- 4. A student may participate in a graduation exercise only one time.

D. Jurisdiction

- 1. Students remain under the jurisdiction of CCPS and school policies, procedures, rules and/or regulations through the completion of graduation exercises.

III. Graduation Attire and Appearance

A. Required Attire

1. Each student is responsible for obtaining and wearing attire that complies with the CCPS student dress code and is appropriate for a formal graduation ceremony.
2. Athletic attire is not permitted.
3. Students must wear the designated cap and gown without personal ornamentation.

B. Graduation Regalia

1. Approved Recognition Categories

- a. Stoles, cords, medals, and other regalia worn at graduation shall reflect:
 - 1) School-based leadership;
 - 2) Academic recognitions and honors, or
 - 3) Recognition as a military-connected student.

2. Approved Regalia

- a. Only school system-approved stoles, cords, medals, and other recognition regalia may be worn as part of graduation attire.

3. Request for Regalia Approval

- a. Students seeking approval to wear graduation regalia not automatically approved by the school shall:
 - 1) Submit a Graduation Regalia Approval Request Form (3310.2) to the school principal;
 - 2) Attach a clear photograph or image of the regalia items(s)
 - 3) Provide a description of the organization, honor, recognition, or affiliation represented; and
 - 4) Explain how the regalia meets approved graduation recognition criteria.

4. Principal Review

- a. The school principal shall determine whether the regalia:
 - 1) Represents school-based leadership, academic achievement honors or military-connected student recognition;
 - 2) Is consistent with school and district expectations for graduation attire; and
 - 3) Meets established CCPS guidelines for approved regalia.
- b. If the principal recommends approval, the principal shall:

Students 3310.1

Adopted: 7/73

Revised: 1/3/07; 7/9/09; 8/4/10; 10/10/14; 8/15/16; 11/20/18; 8/15/22; 3/15/23; 10/5/26

Reviewed without any changes:

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- 1) Approve the request form;
 - 2) Attach supporting documentation and photographs; and
 - 3) Forward the complete packet to the Executive Director of Secondary Schools.
 5. District Review and Final Approval
 - a. The Executive Director of Secondary Schools shall;
 - 1) Review the principal's recommendation and supporting documentation; and
 - 2) Submit recommended for approval to the Superintendent for final determination.
 6. Notification and Verification
 - a. The Executive Director of Secondary Schools shall notify the principal(s) at each school of the addition.
 - b. The principal at the requesting school shall notify the student.
 - c. A record of approved regalia will be maintained in the superintendent's office; and
 - d. Only fully approved regalia may be worn during the graduation ceremony.
- IV. Student Conduct and Expectation
- A. Student Behavior
 1. Students must conduct themselves in a dignified and respective manner.
 2. Students may be removed from the ceremony if they engage in any behavior that disrupts the event or creates un-necessary distractions.
 - B. Parent Notification
 1. Parents and guardians shall be informed of the behavioral expectations prior to graduation.
- V. Graduation Recognition and Honors
- A. Graduates with Distinction
 1. The top five students ranked by cumulative weighted grade point averages (GPAs), shall be introduced during the graduation ceremony. If students are tied for the fifth ranking, all students tied for fifth will be included.
 2. Students with a cumulative weighted GPA of 3.9 and above will be recognized as a Graduate with Distinction.
 3. Graduates with Distinction shall be recognized in the graduation program and wear a designated distinction enhancement.

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B. Valedictorian and Salutatorian Notification

1. Students shall be notified of their status after final grades and rankings are confirmed prior to the day of graduation.

VI. Student Speakers and Graduation program

A. Student Speakers

1. Each high school shall include two student speakers:
 - a. The class president; and,
 - b. One speaker selected by the Graduates with Distinction.
2. The Senior Sponsor and the principal and/or 12th grade administrator shall supervise the selection process of the Graduate with Distinction speaker and count the ballots.
3. Any Graduates with Distinction who express interest in speaking will be considered in the vote. Any member of the Graduates with Distinction may decline to speak prior to the vote.

B. Speech Review

1. Student speeches shall be reviewed in advance by the principal and/or his/her designee for appropriate content.
2. Personal references to religion during the presentations are permitted.
3. Any effort to lead the entire graduating class and/or the audience in a prayer or religious activity is prohibited by law.

VII. Religious Expression and Baccalaureate Services

A. Graduation Ceremonies

1. Student-led prayer during graduation exercises is prohibited.
2. Scheduled moments of silence or reflection are prohibited unless facilitated by the principal to recognize a deceased classmate.

B. Baccalaureate Services

1. Private organizations, including but not limited to religious groups may organize private baccalaureate services which are not school sponsored or endorsed.
2. Planning involving students shall occur outside of the instructional day.
3. CCPS shall not sponsor or endorse such services.
4. School facilities may only be used through the approved facility use process using the Use of Facilities form.
5. CCPS funds shall not support baccalaureate services.

6. Attendance shall be entirely voluntary with students and school personnel acting as private individuals.

VIII. Special Circumstances

A. Foreign Exchange Students

1. Foreign exchange students may participate in graduation exercises.
2. Foreign exchange students shall not receive a Maryland State High School diploma through CCPS (see policy and procedures 3160 regarding acceptance and enrollment of foreign exchange students) but may receive a certificate of participation.
3. Foreign exchange students participating in the graduation ceremony shall be identified with an appropriate notation in the graduation program.

B. Non-Participation

1. Students are not required to participate in graduation exercises.
2. Students may receive an earned diploma regardless of graduation ceremony participation.
3. Participation in graduation exercises may be denied if a student fails to comply with participation standards as outlined above.

IX. Accessibility Accommodations

- A. Students with disabilities shall be provided with reasonable accommodation necessary to participate in graduation exercises, consistent with their IEP, Section 504 Plan, Individualized Healthcare Plan, or other documented needs.
- B. Parents, guardians, family members, and guests requiring accessibility accommodation, including sign language interpretation or other communication supports, should notify the school by the deadline established by the principal.
- C. The principal or designee shall coordinate requests for accommodation and ensure graduation exercises are conducted in compliance with applicable federal and state accessibility requirements.

X. Administrative Responsibilities

A. Principal Responsibilities

1. Each principal is responsible for planning and administering graduation exercises in accordance with these procedures.

B. Superintendent Approval

1. Any additions, deletions or modifications of these procedures require written approval of the Superintendent.