

*Riverside County Office of Education*  
*Board Policy 5127 Graduation Ceremonies and Activities*

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**STUDENTS**

**SUBJECT: Graduation Ceremonies and Activities**

High school graduation ceremonies shall be held to recognize those students who have successfully completed the required course of study, passed all proficiency standards, and thereby earned the right to receive a diploma. The County Board of Education and County Superintendent of Schools believe that students deserve a public celebration that recognizes the significance of their achievement and encourages continuation of the pursuit of learning throughout their lives.

At the discretion of the **Associate** Superintendent or designee, a student who will complete graduation requirements during the summer, and is within ten credits of graduation, may participate in graduation exercises without receiving his/her diploma. When the required credits have been earned, a diploma shall be given to the student.

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6146.4 - Differential Graduation and Competency Standards for Individuals with Exceptional Needs)

(cf. 6146.2 - Certificate of Proficiency/High School Equivalency)

Invocations and/or benedictions shall not be included in graduation ceremonies. Ceremonies or programs involving prayer for graduates shall not be sponsored by the County Office of Education.

(cf. 1330 - Use of School Facilities)

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression: Publications Code)

**Graduation Attire**

The Superintendent or designee may require graduating students to wear ceremonial attire, such as cap and gown, at the ceremony.

(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)

Any graduating student who has completed basic training and is an active member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces may, at the student's option, wear a military dress uniform at the ceremony. (Education Code 35183.3)

Students shall be permitted to wear tribal regalia or recognized objects of religious or cultural significance as an adornment to the customary ceremonial attire, as long as the adornment does not cause a substantial disruption of, or material interference with, the graduation ceremony. (Education Code 35183.1)

Students who desire to wear such adornments shall seek permission from the Superintendent or designee at least 14 days before the graduation ceremony.

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**Disciplinary Considerations**

Students are expected to comply with County Office of Education and school policies, regulations, and rules throughout the school session, including during graduation and related events. Students shall not be denied the privilege of participating in graduation ceremonies and activities except as discipline in cases of serious misconduct. In no event shall a student be denied participation in graduation ceremonies unless the principal or designee has informed the student and the student's parents/guardians of the misconduct and has given them an opportunity to respond.

During the graduation ceremony, a student may be removed from the ceremony for conduct that is disruptive or that poses a risk to safety.

High school seniors shall be notified of this policy in advance, through the student handbook or other means, and shall be required to acknowledge receiving it.

(cf. 5125.2 - Withholding Grades, Diploma or Transcripts)

(cf. 5144 - Discipline)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

(cf. 6161.2 - Damaged or Lost Instructional Materials)

**Legal Reference:**

**EDUCATION CODE**

38119 Lease of personal property; caps and gowns

48904 Liability of parent or guardian; withholding of grades, diplomas, transcripts

51225.5 Honorary diplomas; foreign exchange students

51400-51403 Elementary school diploma

51410 Diplomas: no indication of intellectual classification

51411 Residence as condition for graduation; prohibition

51412 Standards of proficiency

Lee v. Weisman, (1992) 112 S.Ct. 2649

Sands v. Morongo Unified School District (1991) 53 Cal. 3d 863

Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971) 403 U.S. 602

Fowler v. Board of Education of the Hickory Administrative School Unit (1978) 448 F. Supp. 497

Mifflin County School District v. Stewart (PA. Cmwlt. 1986) 503 A.2d 1012, 30 Educ. L.R. 403

Jones v. Clear Creek Independent School District (1992, 5th Cir.) 977 F.2d 963

Harris v. Joint School District #241 (1994, 9th Cir.) No. 93-35839

**Management Resources:**

**CDE PROGRAM ADVISORIES**

0615.89 Granting credit for passing GED, SPB:88/89-11