

Participation in Commencement Exercises

Statement of Policy

A student's right to participate in the commencement exercises of the School District's graduating class is a privilege. 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 before the date of the ceremony. Students who complete their requirements after the date of commencement exercises will receive their diploma at that time.

Organization and Content of Commencement Exercises

The school administration shall exercise plenary control over all aspects of any graduation ceremony held within the district. 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 selected to participate may choose to deliver an address, poem, reading, song, musical presentation, or any other pronouncement of their choosing. The principal or graduation advisor shall review and approve the student's address, poem, reading, song, musical presentation, or any other pronouncement of their choosing prior to its presentation to the audience attending the graduation ceremony to ensure that there is no conflict with the Establishment Clause found in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, The Idaho Constitution or the laws of the state of Idaho.

The printed program for the commencement exercises shall include the following paragraph:

“Any presentation by participants of graduation exercises is the private expression of the individual participants and does not necessarily reflect any official position of Madison School District 321, its Board of Trustees, administration or employees or indicate the views of any other graduates.

The Board of Trustees of the Madison School District 321 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 of Trustees, however, does not endorse religion, but recognizes the rights of individuals to have the freedom to express their individual political, social or religious views, for this is the essence of education.”

Legal Reference:

United States Constitution-1st Amendment
Art. 9, Sec. 6, Idaho Constitution – Religious Test and Teaching in School
Prohibited
I.C. § 33-1603 Sectarian Instruction Forbidden

I.C. § 33-512 Governance of Schools
I.C. § 67-5909 Acts Prohibited

Policy History:

Adopted on: June 21, 2012

Revised on: