

**SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Date:** May 15, 2017

**To:** Senior High School Principals and Vice Principals; Area Superintendents

**Subject:** STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT AND OTHER SENIOR ACTIVITIES

**Department and/or Persons Concerned:** Senior High School Principals, Vice Principals, Counselors, and Area Superintendents

**Reference:** Administrative Procedure 4770

**Brief Explanation:**

This circular provides clear and consistent expectations for participation of seniors in commencement and other senior activities for 2016-2017 school year.

**General Overview**

Per Administrative Procedure 4470, section D.11 (a.) “As a representative of the Board of Education, the principal shall designate those individuals who may participate in commencement ceremonies, approve the content of the program, and make all related decisions. Student participation is not required, but every eligible graduate who wishes to participate must adhere to the principal and school commencement ceremony rules if participation is to be approved. Any student who agrees to be a participant and then fails to follow the principal’s direction is subject to disciplinary action.” Administrative Procedure 4770 calls out the following specific requirements for participation in commencement activities:

- Attain a cumulative weighted grade point average (WGPA) of 2.0 or higher in grades 9-12
- Earn a minimum of 44 semester credits
- Meet District adopted UC “a-g” graduation requirements
- Maintain a minimum of 2.0 in citizenship (Admin Procedure 4710) based on first semester grades (senior year) and the grading period prior to graduation:
  - No five-day suspensions and/or zero tolerance infractions during senior year (unless cleared by School Site Appeal Committee)
  - Seniors may be denied participation in commencement ceremony (and other senior activities) for suspensions of less than five days during their senior year
  - Decisions of the School Site Appeal Committee are final
  - Students with disabilities receiving special education service may be exempt from this requirement [For more information, refer to AP 4770, section D.11.b. (2).].

**Site Responsibilities**

In the interest of ensuring system-wide equity for all SDUSD students, it is important for sites across the system to have clear and consistent expectations for student conduct and behavior as they relate to participation in commencement and other senior activities such as Prom and Senior Breakfast:

<b>To Earn a Diploma</b>	<b>To Walk in Graduation</b>	<b>To attend prom and other senior activities</b>
<b>44 semester credits in required courses</b>	<b>Meet the expectations for a diploma or Certificate of Completion</b>	Meet the expectations for a diploma or Certificate of Completion
<b>Meet District adopted UC a-g graduation requirements</b>	Clear semester I and II attendance (absences and tardies) three weeks before school is dismissed	Clear semester I and II attendance (absences and tardies) three weeks before school is dismissed
<b>Maintain an overall academic WGPA of 2.0 or higher in grades 9-12</b>	<b>Maintain a minimum 2.0 in citizenship (right to be cleared to walk by site appeal committee)</b>	Have no attendance issues the last three weeks of school
	<b>No suspensions in the second semester (right to be cleared to walk by site appeal committee)</b>	Maintain a minimum 2.0 in citizenship (right to be cleared to walk by site appeal committee)
	<b>No five day suspensions during the school year</b>	No suspensions in the second semester (right to be cleared to walk by site appeal committee)
	No involvement in senior pranks	No five day suspensions during the school year
	Complete any iHigh courses needed to meet graduation requirements by June 9, 2017.	No involvement in senior pranks

Note: Bold = Required in Grad 4770

In order to be fair to students and families, District graduation requirements, as well as site-specific requirements, must be clearly and consistently articulated to all students and parents, with sufficient opportunity for remediation, when possible. Unfortunately, meeting some of these requirements may not be known until shortly before the senior activities take place. It is the responsibility of the site administrators, therefore, to keep parents informed as soon as possible so that family disappointments are avoidable whenever possible.

As a reminder, to ensure that expectations for students are clear and consistent, the following timeline of guidelines is encouraged:

- Principals or vice principals should discuss expectations/requirements directly with all seniors in a general meeting in September
- Principals or vice principals should discuss expectations/requirements directly with all parents/guardians of seniors in a general meeting in September/Open House
- A letter should be sent home with seniors for parent/guardian signature (with accompanying auto dialer phone message and email to parents)
- Signed letters (by parents) should be collected and placed in a binder in site office. Site administrators should communicate with parents for letters not returned
- Periodic follow-up auto dialer phone messages and emails should be sent to parents, including reminders for Saturday School (CASSAS) dates. (The current auto dialer system logs all calls and emails so that site administrators can see who has received the information and “follow up” with parents not contacted.) Site should document “follow-up” communication with log of dates and persons contacted
- Direct communication (evening or “work number” phone calls) should be initiated with parents of students who are at risk of “running out” of Saturday School (CASSAS) dates to clear absences. Site should document “follow-up” communication with log of dates and persons contacted
- High expectations for appropriate student conduct are not only fair, but also reasonable, if we are to prepare students to be responsible good citizens who understand that there are consequences for thoughtless and inappropriate behavior. It is also only fair that students and their families be given every opportunity to meet these expectations by making the requirements clear and consistent from the beginning of the school year until the end.

For additional information, contact Franny Del Carmen-Aguilar at 619-725-7255 or [fdelcarmen@sandi.net](mailto:fdelcarmen@sandi.net).

APPROVED:



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