**Mackay School District No. 182**

**INSTRUCTION 2720**

Participation in Commencement Exercises

Statement of Policy

Because the Board believes that completion of the requirements for a diploma from the public schools is an achievement that improves the community, as well as the individual, the Board wishes to recognize that achievement in a publicly celebrated graduation exercise.

A student’s opportunity to participate in the commencement exercises of the 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, are in good standing at the time of commencement exercises, and have not been denied participation in graduation exercises by reason of unacceptable conduct. Students who complete their requirements after the date of commencement exercises will receive their diploma at that time.

Dress and Comportment

This exercise is a school sponsored event and should be a dignified, formal ceremony which recognizes the academic achievements of the entire graduating class. All school rules and applicable District policies will be enforced during this event. Audiences and graduating students should be aware of the dignity of the moment and may be requested to act appropriately until the completion of the ceremony.

Students are expected to dress and act in a fashion that is commensurate with the dignity of the ceremony. Use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs during or immediately preceding the ceremony is not acceptable and may be grounds for removal from the premises. Boys are expected to dress conservatively with long pants and a dress shirt. Girls are expected to wear dresses or other appropriate clothing. Sweat shirts or pants, shorts of any kind, shirts with slogans, bare feet, miniskirts, blue jeans, or other casual attire are unacceptable. Hats or head covers of any kind will not be permitted to be worn under the graduation cap unless the principal or designee specifically makes an exception to the policy. Graduating students will not be permitted to wear sunglasses during the ceremony.

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 and may opt to pick up his/her diploma at the high school office following the graduation ceremony instead. The privilege of participation in graduation exercises may be revoked by the principal of the school in the instances of any student unwilling to comply with regulations of dress and behavior.

Candidates for valedictorian and salutatorian will be selected based on grade point average (GPA), number of honors, dual credit, and Advanced Placement classes, ACT scores, and community involvement. Valedictorians, salutatorians, students with a GPA of 4.0, and other outstanding examples will be recognized at this ceremony.

The District may provide students with an opportunity to participate in the planning of graduation ceremonies. This may include allowing the senior class to select music, select a guest speaker, create a senior slide show, and/or design the program. However, all aspects of graduation will be subject to the approval of the school administrator and the Board.

Students selected to participate may choose to deliver an address, poem, reading, song, musical presentation, or any other pronouncement of their choosing. The principal 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 they are consistent with the District’s educational mission and 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 District will not sponsor baccalaureate ceremonies.

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: March 23, 2015

Revised on: July 9, 2018