

Policy

COMMENCEMENT ACTIVITIES

The River Edge Board of Education endorses the annual elementary school graduation program.. The date of graduation shall annually be recommended by the superintendent and approved by the board.

Guidelines for Graduation Year Activities

The board directs the superintendent to ascertain that no student be barred from participation for arbitrary, discriminatory or financial reasons. Student participation in special graduation year activities will require conduct of the highest caliber in all school situations.

Criteria for exclusion from these activities concern consistent behavioral patterns and shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Consistent involvement in disciplinary action(s);
- B. Suspension.

The final decision shall be made by the superintendent.

The student and parent/guardian shall be notified of the denial of the right to participate prior to the graduation ceremony. Such denial shall be treated in the same manner as a suspension and the student affected shall be afforded due process rights as provided in board policy and procedure: 5114 Suspension/Expulsion.

Graduation Procedures and Ceremonies

When a student or his/her parents/guardians experiences financial hardship and is unable to pay the costs of participation in graduation ceremonies, the board shall assume the costs of the following items:

- A. One year book;
- B. Other, as may be determined by the board.

Financial hardship shall be defined on a case by case basis.

Awarding of Certificate of Completion

A board member shall present a copy of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States and the amendments thereto, and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey and the amendments thereto to each student upon graduation from elementary school.

The president of the board of education and/or another designated member of the board shall award the certificate of 6th grade completion. Board members and former board members shall be afforded the opportunity to award diplomas to their own children.

The board shall not prevent, or otherwise deny participation in, constitutionally protected prayer in any district school, consistent with guidance issued by the United States Department of Education and applicable judicial decisions interpreting the religion clauses of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

Adopted: November 28, 1990
Revised: December 3, 2003
NJSBA Review/Update: August 2017

COMMENCEMENT ACTIVITIES (continued)

Readopted: September 26, 2018

Key Words

Commencement Activities, Graduation Ceremonies, Voting, Voting Registration

<u>Legal References:</u>	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-5.1	Boards of education prohibited from excluding students from graduation ceremony or from obtaining yearbook for inability to pay fees
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:11-1	General mandatory powers and duties
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:36-18	Books containing organic laws at graduation
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:36-27	Voting information
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:37-2	Causes for suspension or expulsion of students
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:54-20	Powers of board (county vocational schools)
	<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:8-5.1 <u>et seq.</u>	Implementation of Graduation Requirements
	<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:16-7.1 <u>et seq.</u>	Student conduct

Ballato v. Long Branch Board of Education, 1990 S.L.D. (August 20)Lee v. Weisman, 112 S. Ct. 2649 (1992)R.L. v. Kingsway Regional Board of Education, 95 NJAR 2d (EDU) 296D.C. v. Parsippany Troy Hills Board of Education, 96 NJAR 2d (EDU) 697DO'G v. Ridgefield Park Board of Education, 96 NJAR 2d (EDU) 820R.F. v. Park Ridge Board of Education, 97 NJAR2d (EDU) 1American Civil Liberties Union v. Blackhorse Pike Regional Board of Education, 84 F. 3d 1471 (3d Cir. 1996)**Possible**

<u>Cross References:</u>	*5113	Attendance, Absences and excuses
	*5114	Suspension and expulsion
	*5126	Awards for achievement
	*5131	Conduct/discipline
	*6111	School calendar
	*6115	Ceremonies and observances
	*6141.2	Recognition of religious beliefs and customs
	*6146	Graduation requirements

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.