

FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	Reg. No. 400-10
Subject: COMMENCEMENT PROCEDURES AND CEREMONIES	Issued: 10/2/78
Preparing Office: Office of the Superintendent	Amended: 9/16/15

I. Policy 422.2

II. Procedures

A. General Guidelines

1. All students are required to participate in commencement rehearsal exercises in order to be eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony. Exceptions may be made by the principal under rare and extenuating circumstances.
2. Commencement dates will be established after the official school year calendar is adopted. The Office of School Administration and Leadership, with consultation from the Superintendent, will be responsible for establishing dates for commencement ceremonies.
3. The last instructional day for seniors shall be scheduled no later than three (3) school days prior to that school's commencement ceremony.
4. Each school will structure the commencement ceremony to reflect the tradition and needs of the school's community.
5. Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) provides funds for each school to conduct a commencement ceremony based on the number of students in the graduating class.

B. Seniors who transfer from one school to another will graduate from the school that ordered the diploma with the exception of Heather Ridge.

C. Flexible Evening High School (FEHS) Students

1. Students meeting graduation requirements while exclusively attending FEHS:
 - a. Will be invited to participate in commencement exercises conducted by the FEHS staff, or
 - b. May request to participate in commencement exercises with the high school assigned to the location of the student's residence, which will not be unreasonably denied.
2. Name of school on diploma and transcripts:
 - a. The diploma and transcript will reflect the name of the FCPS high school attended prior to enrollment in FEHS.
 - b. In the case where a student previously attended a non-FCPS high school, the diploma and transcript will reflect the name of the FCPS high school assigned to the location of the student's residence.

D. Foreign Exchange Students

1. Upon enrollment, foreign exchange students must declare if they are certificate-bound or diploma-bound.
2. Diploma-bound foreign exchange students must meet all testing, credit and enrollment requirements for graduation.
3. Certificate-bound foreign exchange students will receive a certificate of participation in the exchange program but will not be permitted to participate in commencement ceremonies.

E. Heather Ridge Students

1. When a student remains at Heather Ridge for the senior year, the principal of Heather Ridge and the home school principal will jointly decide in which commencement ceremony the student will participate. The ceremony will either be the home school ceremony or the Heather Ridge ceremony in conjunction with the FEHS ceremony. In cases where an agreement cannot be reached, the instructional director of high schools will decide.
4. The diploma will be issued from the home school regardless of the site of the commencement ceremony.
5. Heather Ridge students who return to their home school through mainstreaming will participate in the home school ceremony.
6. The principal of Heather Ridge School or the principal's designee will discuss with all 11th grade students and their parents the parameters of the commencement ceremonies upon enrolling at Heather Ridge. The parameters will be given to these students and their parents, in writing, usually at the intake session.
7. Students who are promoted to the 11th grade while enrolled at Heather Ridge will have the parameters of the commencement ceremonies presented to them and their parents in writing.

F. Regular Education Students

1. To receive a Maryland high school diploma, regular education students must meet all testing, credit and enrollment requirements for graduation.
2. Students who fail to meet all graduation requirements are ineligible for the Maryland high school certificate or diploma and are ineligible to participate in commencement ceremonies.

G. Special Education Students

1. To receive a Maryland high school diploma, special education students must meet all testing, credit and enrollment requirements, regardless of the level of special education service.
2. Diploma-bound special education students who fail to meet all graduation requirements are ineligible for the Maryland high school diploma, and are ineligible to participate in commencement ceremonies.

3. Special education students who are determined by the IEP committee to be unable to meet credit and/or testing requirements may be eligible for the Maryland High School Certificate. Such eligibility is determined by the IEP committee with the agreement of the parent or legal guardian.
4. Special education students receiving the Maryland High School Certificate are to be included in commencement ceremonies on the same basis as students receiving diplomas. No special designation is to be made on programs or news releases, and the awarding of such certificates should be concurrent with diplomas.

H. Suspended Students

Students suspended from school during the required rehearsal and/or commencement dates are ineligible to participate in commencement ceremonies. The principal, or designee, shall be responsible for conferring the diploma to the suspended student provided all graduation requirements have been met.

Approved:

Original signed by

Theresa R. Alban
Superintendent