



WINDHAM SCHOOL
DISTRICT

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DATE: September 12, 2023
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SUPERSEDES: SD-10.04 (rev. 3)
January 23, 2019

SUPERINTENDENT DIRECTIVE

SUBJECT: GRADUATION CEREMONIES

AUTHORITY: WBP-03.02, “Windham School District Superintendent Responsibilities and Authority”; WBP-07.12, “Employee Timekeeping”; TDCJ *Inmate Visitation Plan*

APPLICABILITY: Windham School District

POLICY:

Graduation ceremonies recognize graduates of eligible Windham School District (WSD) programs. Ceremonies recognizing the completion of other WSD programs may be held at the superintendent’s discretion.

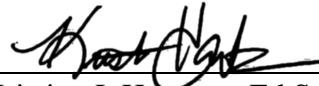
PROCEDURES:

- I. Eligibility
 - A. The principal must verify a student’s fulfillment of program completion requirements before the student is eligible to participate in a graduation ceremony as a graduate.
 - B. Graduates classified as Level 1 - 3 who earn a high school diploma or high school equivalency (HSE) certificate, or complete a full career and technical education (CTE) course within WSD are eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies. Graduates classified as Level 4 or who are in restrictive housing at the time of the ceremony may attend graduation at the warden’s discretion. Graduates classified as Level 5 at the time of the ceremony are ineligible to participate in graduation ceremonies.
 - C. The superintendent may approve the recognition of graduates of other WSD programs in separate ceremonies or as part of HSE or high school diploma ceremonies, as space permits.

II. General Requirements

- A. Each campus that provides HSE test administration or a high school diploma program must hold at least two ceremonies each academic year but are encouraged to hold up to four ceremonies. The regional principal may grant exceptions from this requirement for good cause.
- B. The date of graduation ceremonies should be coordinated by the principal and approved by the regional principal and warden.
- C. Graduates may only participate in one ceremony for all certificates earned since the last ceremony. Campuses are not required to track graduates who do not participate in graduation ceremonies. The principal may allow an eligible graduate to participate in a subsequent ceremony.
- D. Combining campuses for ceremonies is permissible if approved by the warden for each campus participating.
- E. Two adult guests from each graduate's approved visitation list, along with accompanying children, may attend a graduation ceremony. Guests are subject to the requirements of the *Inmate Visitation Plan*.
- F. Graduates who are ineligible for contact visits or contact visits with children may participate in the graduation ceremony, but may not attend a reception which would include contact visits unless approved by the warden.
- G. Use of the unit food service department is encouraged; however, if the unit food service department does not provide refreshments that meet the needs of the graduation reception, a reasonable, standard-sized cake or pastries, drinks, cups, utensils, napkins, table coverings, and graduation banners may be purchased with the procurement card.
- H. No WSD funds may be used for caps and gowns without written approval from the superintendent.
- I. Graduation programs and invitations must be created using the standard WSD template, which can be requested from the Communications Department. Programs and invitations may be printed on the campus.
- J. Photographing the ceremony is permitted. Procurement cards may be used to print photographs.
- K. If possible, speakers at ceremonies should be community or state leaders or otherwise notable or inspirational individuals. Speakers must be approved by the superintendent.
- L. Ceremonies should be followed by at least a two-hour contact visit for eligible graduates.

- M. Each campus must document and maintain the following information: the date and location of each ceremony, the names of graduates sorted by program completed, and the name of the speakers.
- N. Campuses may hold informal class ceremonies to recognize graduates of Career and Technical Education programs, CHANGES, Cognitive Intervention, or Parenting if the recognitions are not combined with regular HSE ceremonies. Class ceremonies may not include guests or have a reception, and must be held during the school week. No WSD funds may be used for class ceremonies except to print photographs.
- O. The provisions of Windham Board Policy 07.12 “Employee Timekeeping” apply to employees working during graduation ceremonies.



Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S.
Superintendent
Windham School District