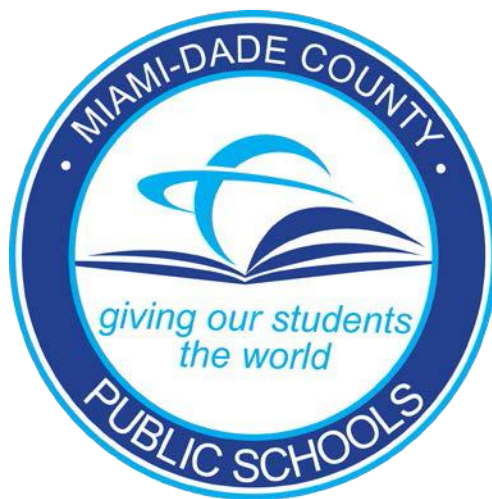


MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Division of Athletics, and Activities

Graduation Guidelines



Class of 2026

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

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Mr. Luis Diaz, Chief Operating Officer
District Operations

Mr. Steffond Cone, Assistant Superintendent
District Operations

Mr. Kevin E. Lawrence, Administrative Director
District Operations

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

District Operations Division of Athletics, and Activities

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GRADUATION GUIDELINES

Graduation from Miami-Dade County Public Schools indicates that students have satisfactorily completed all requirements of law and standards for high school graduation as prescribed by the State and School Board.

At appropriate times during the school year the staff will arrange for awards and recognition programs and graduation exercises. There will be no formal graduation exercises for elementary and middle schools.

The purpose of *Graduation Guidelines* is to answer many of the questions that arise during a school's preparation for its commencement exercises. The guidelines are written in a question-and-answer format to provide a more "user friendly" presentation of the issues and should be used in conjunction with *Protocol Guidelines for Official School Board Events*.

Is there a graduation timeline for Activities Directors?

A graduation timeline can be found in the *M-DCPS Student Activities Handbook* on pages 96-98, (<https://mdcpsathleticsandactivities.net/wp-content/uploads/Student-Activities-Manual.pdf>). For your convenience, a copy of that timeline has been attached to this document. (See Attachment 1)

Where can I find a list of all high school graduations?

Go to (<https://mdcpsathleticsandactivities.net/>) there is a link on the home page to a listing of all Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) graduations, including the site, the date, and the time.

What must be included in the graduation program?

- M-DCPS Board Members' names (See Attachment 2)
- Name of the Superintendent (See Attachment 2)
- Names of the Region Superintendent and Region Directors
- Names of school site administrators
- Names of feeder pattern principals (Middle Schools, K-8 Centers and Elementary Schools), where applicable
- List of all graduates with a disclaimer (See samples below)
**This program reflects only graduates announced by the printing deadline. Only students who have completed designated requirements will march in this ceremony. Diplomas are issued when all graduation requirements have been completed.*
**Class of 20__ as certified by the Registrar on_____.*
- Indication of cum laude, magna cum laude, summa cum laude, and Superintendent's Diploma of Distinction for designated graduates

- Order of the ceremony
- Date of the ceremony
- Disclosure Statement (See Attachment 3)
- Non-discrimination Statement (See Attachment 4)

Platform guests' names are not to be included in the program; however, they should be introduced during the graduation ceremony by the Principal. The School Board Member of senior high schools in his or her district may request to bring greetings at the graduation ceremony. If they wish to bring greetings, their name should be included in the program. The School Board Member should be listed in the program according to the following examples:

**The Honorable _____, Chair
The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida**

**The Honorable _____, Vice Chair
The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida**

**The Honorable _____, Member
The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida**

Be certain that all names are spelled correctly, and the appropriate title is listed.

What should be included in the graduation ceremony?

- Flags should be visible on stage (U.S. Flag/State of Florida Flag)
- Processional (music must be played as dignitaries process)
- Script Binder must be placed on podium
- Pledge of Allegiance (**Male graduates are to remove their caps**) – refer to School Board Policy 8810 – THE AMERICAN FLAG
- National Anthem
- Welcome and Opening Remarks
- Introduction of Honored Guests
- Reflections/Speeches: The speeches should adhere to school custom and be limited to three to five minutes in length
- Presentation of Diplomas
- Conferring of Diplomas
- Concluding Remarks
- Recessional

Schools may choose to include more in the program; the items listed above are the minimum.

What are the guidelines concerning student speeches at graduation?

M-DCPS will no longer recognize a valedictorian and salutatorian. The students who speak at graduation should be selected by the school. Many schools designate the Student Government President and the President of the senior

class to speak. Some schools conduct auditions for the right to speak at graduation; students should submit their speeches and perform the speeches orally before a committee composed of administrators, faculty, and students. Students who have earned the right, either through auditions or by virtue of holding a particular designated office, to deliver speeches at graduation should meet with the principal or a designee prior to the occasion to discuss their rights and responsibilities regarding free speech and expression as follows:

- The rights of students to prepare speeches on their own without undue restrictions or interference.
- The process by which students may, if they so choose, obtain staff assistance in preparing their speech, e.g., research, writing, timing, and delivery.
- An explanation and definition of speech that is not protected by law or the First Amendment, e.g., obscene as to minors; defamatory, including libel and slander; and materially and substantially disruptive of school activities.
- Although students have the right to express themselves freely, the Supreme Court has indicated that there are limits to the expression, particularly when there are minors involved. In *Bethel v. Fraser* (1986), the Court upheld that a student delivering a lewd speech to minors could be suspended:
"Students do not shed their constitutional rights at the school door and may exercise their right to freedom of expression unless that right materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline or conflicts with the rights of others in the school."
- Information about the graduation ceremony and the student's responsibilities to the audience and the occasion.
- The right of student speakers, regardless of how they were selected, including competition in a speech-writing contest, to subsequently modify their presentation without staff approval or consent.
- A warning that students whose speech is determined to fall into one of the classifications as stated above, that is not protected by the First Amendment, may, depending on the nature and specific circumstances, be required to conclude or modify their presentation.

Please refer to *Procedures for Promoting and Maintaining a Safe Learning Environment, Student Expression*, for further information (<http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies>).

Also, in accordance with Board Policy 5722 – School-Sponsored Student Publications, Productions, and Performances, commencement speeches are included as a form of communication that is part of the broad definition of freedom of speech and expression. The student delivering the speech is to be free from arbitrary censorship. If a student chooses to deliver a speech that includes a prayer, this is not in violation of the Supreme Court ruling (*Lee v.*

Weisman, 1992) banning student-led prayer at graduation ceremonies as long as:

- Student speakers are selected on purely neutral and secular criterion
- Student speakers are given “free reign over the content of the presentations”

What should be written on the tickets? What type of tickets should be used?

- If counterfeiting of tickets will be an issue, you may consider using tickets that cannot be readily duplicated. Distribute tickets as close to the ceremony as possible to cut down on the time available to counterfeit them.
- The school's policy on the number of tickets must be publicized in writing and distributed to students at least two months prior to the ceremony.
- The tickets should reflect the following:
 - School Name
 - Graduation 20__
 - Site Name and Address
 - Date and Time
 - Doors Open: _____
 - Please Be Seated by: _____
 - Admit One
 - Check with your graduation site for additional specifications
- If the school is not permitting photographs or videotaping during the ceremony, this statement should be included on the ticket.
- The tickets may include other information that the school deems pertinent.
- Fifteen tickets should be hand delivered to the Division of Athletics, Activities and Accreditation located at 9040 SW 79th Avenue, Miami FL 33156.

What pre-graduation planning should be done with the students?

School administrators shall meet with the students participating in the graduation ceremony to review proper dress, graduation etiquette, and appropriate behavior (i.e. no decoration of caps, no cell phone usage, etc.). Graduation procedures and guidelines must be provided to each student in **writing** at least one month prior to the ceremony.

SAFE NETWORK- ASSUMED NAME AND PRONOUNS

- Miami-Dade County Public Schools' SAFE Network is a suicide prevention program under the Division of Student Services, whose mission is to ensure a safe and affirming environment for LGBTQ students by building comprehensive and inclusive programs that support all students.
- Under federal laws, the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (Equal Protection), the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, Title IX of the Education Amendment Acts of 1972 and School Board Policies 5517 & 5517.01 students have the right to be free of discrimination and

harassment based on their gender, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation.

- Based on these laws our students are entitled to accommodations to ensure they are affirmed in school and can learn in a safe and supportive environment. Once a student reaches 18 years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education, the consent is required from the student only, unless the student qualifies as a dependent under the law.
- The following are best practices our schools should be following:
 - **Dress Code:** Students should have the right to express their gender at school, within the parameters of the school's dress code, without discrimination or harassment. The school's dress code should be gender-neutral and not restrict a student's clothing choices on the basis of gender. In the event that the dress code has differing expectations or practices based on gender, students should be permitted to dress in accordance with their gender identity.
 - **Names and Pronouns:** School staff should address students by their chosen name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity, regardless of whether there has been a legal name change. Upon request, the chosen name and gender should be included in the district's information management systems, in addition to the student's legal name. District-generated student email addresses should also reflect the student's chosen name, if first names are identifiable in such addresses. These changes inform all staff, including substitute teachers, of the name and pronoun to use when addressing the student, and help avoid inadvertent disclosures.
 - **Privacy and Confidentiality Regarding Disclosures:** Transgender and gender expansive students have the right to decide when, with whom, and to what extent to share private information. When contacting the parent/guardian of a transgender or gender expansive student, school staff should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's assigned sex at birth, unless the student or parent/guardian has specified otherwise.
- Ensure prior to graduation if any student has an assumed name in our District Student Information System (DSIS), or if any student is being referred with an assumed name and inform, they will be able to complete a card at graduation which allows them to write the name they want to use. Students who have a legal name change with proof of court documents must submit an amended birth certificate to finalize the change in DSIS. For assistance with accommodating students with an assumed name, please contact Gladys Duran, Curriculum Support Specialist, Division of Student Services (305) 995-1778. For accommodations with an assumed name on a diploma, please contact the FASCO office Tony Ullivari (305) 883-5323.

- If you have any questions about M-DCPS SAFE Network and support for LGBTQ students, please call Ms. Gladys Duran, LCSW at (305)995-1778.

What are graduation site visits? Who should attend?

During March, graduation site visits will take place. At these meetings, each site reviews its policies and procedures. The site visit is mandatory for each school's Activities Director. Other administrators and school personnel are welcome to attend at the discretion of the senior high school principal.

What about pictures and/or videotaping at graduation?

Many schools arrange for a photographer to take the pictures of graduates. This is done through a Proposal for Photographic Services for Commencement (Form No. 6798) which must be submitted to at least three different vendors.

- Many schools also arrange for a videotape to be made of the graduation ceremony. This must also be done through a Proposal for Video Services for Commencement (Form No. 7001) and submitted to at least three different vendors **unless** an M-DCPS club is doing the videotaping.
- If a M-DCPS school club is doing the videotaping as a fundraiser, the provisions in Section IV, Chapter 2 (K) (15) in the *Manual of Internal Fund Accounting* must be met. (See Attachment 5).
- If pictures or videotaping is taking place during the graduation, the following message must be posted on signs at all entrances to the site: **This event is being videotaped. By entering the event, you are giving your permission to be recorded and to have your likeness used in the final product.** (See Attachment 6)
- A school may choose not to allow parents to take photographs or to videotape. If this is the case, then this notice must be included on the tickets and posted at all entrances.

How are parking passes/VIP parking passes issued for graduation?

District Operations will issue these passes. Passes to the appropriate sites will be delivered to School Board Members, The Superintendent, the Superintendent's Senior Staff, and Region Staff Members. The remainder of a school's passes will be given to the school to distribute to other individuals selected by the school. The number of passes will vary according to the graduation site. Please be sure that the distinguished guests attending the school's graduation know where to park. A pre-graduation phone call by the school to guests is the best policy to use to advise them of parking procedures and appropriate attire for your school's graduation.

Who pays for the stage flowers, decorations, programs, and/or other materials used for graduation?

Fees to pay for flowers, decorations, programs, and/or other materials used during the commencement ceremony **shall not be imposed on students.**

These types of items are considered optional; therefore, the graduating class members shall decide on the options available and budget for the projected expenses from fundraising proceeds of the activities conducted during the year. Students should not be required to pay personally for honorary regalia. Such regalia should be paid for through club dues or school funds. Clubs can also fundraise to cover these costs. At the principal's discretion, some of these expenses may be paid from the school's Special Purpose function if fundraising proceeds are not sufficient to cover reasonable costs. Available revenue in the Classes and Clubs (5003) program, General Activities (0165) function, may also be used to subsidize reasonable costs.

Schools graduating at the same site on the same day usually divide the cost of the flowers for the stage.

What is the procedure for student payment for caps and gowns?

Student gowns should be purchased online by parents and / or students through the selected vendor's website.

Who pays for the caps and gowns for faculty, staff, and other honorary guests?

The rental of gowns for faculty, staff, and other honorary guests involved in the commencement ceremony may not be paid from student funds. At the principal's discretion, rental of caps and gowns for faculty and staff involved in the commencement ceremony may be paid from the Special Purpose function (5004-0458). Rental of caps and gowns for the School Board Members and the Superintendent's Senior Staff (including Region staff) will be paid for by District Operations. The school site is responsible for the rental of gowns for any additional platform guests.

What is the procedure for the conferring of diplomas?

At the **conclusion** of the ceremony, the principal should state the following:

As principal of _____ Senior High School, I certify that these seniors have met all of the requirements set forth by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the state of Florida. By the power vested in me, I hereby declare the Class of 20 to be graduates of _____ Senior High School.

How is the tassel worn?

Traditionally, the tassel is worn on the right side of the mortar board until the principal at the conclusion of the ceremony officially and formally confers upon the recipients the status of graduate. The tassel is then moved from the right side to the left side of the mortar board.

What if I need a piano for graduation?

If a piano is needed, the school must make its own arrangements with the facility or an outside vendor.

What safety precautions should be made for individuals walking up and down stage stairs?

The principal will ensure that an adult is positioned at each stairway as guests and students ascend and descend onto the stage and return down the steps. Their specific role will be to ensure that assistance is available and provided to each person walking up and down the stairs. This shall be offered at any graduation site that provides temporary stairs leading on to the platform/stage without rails on each side of the steps.

What are the procedures concerning diploma plaques?

If your school makes diploma plaques an option for graduates, ensure that you provide a list of the non-graduates to the vendor prior to the ceremony so that those plaques are pulled and not sold.

What about the selling of food during graduation?

Schools are not to sell food. At certain graduation sites, food service may be optional. No alcoholic beverages are to be served or permitted on the premises.

How long may a graduation ceremony be delayed?

For reasons of crowd control, schools should make every effort to begin the graduation at the appointed time. No graduation ceremony should begin later than 15 minutes from the designated start time.

What is the proper procedure for a graduation recessional?

Students should recess first. All platform guests should remain on stage until all graduates have exited.

How long should a graduation ceremony last?

A graduation ceremony **should not exceed two hours**. Even schools with large graduating classes should be able to complete the ceremony within this time frame.

What are the protocol guidelines for the processional order and introductions of M-DCPS' personnel and guests at graduation ceremonies?

The school's principal should lead the dignitaries or processional to the stage in one single line. The principal should be followed by:

- Board Member of the School
- School Board Chair
- School Board Vice Chair
- School Board Members (alphabetical by last name)

- Superintendent of Schools
- Senior Elected Official of Local Municipality
- Federal Officials (by rank)
- State Officials (by rank)
- Local Officials (by rank and/or alphabetical if there is more than one person of the same rank such as two County Commissioners)
- Provosts and College President (School for Advanced Studies, New World, Alonzo & Tracy Mournings, Mast @ FIU, etc.)
- Guest Speaker(s) and Special Guests **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Chief Auditor, School Board Attorney **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Deputy Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer, Chief Facilities Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Human Capital Officer, Chief Intergovernmental Affairs, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Maintenance and Operations Officer, Chief of Police, Chief of Staff, Chief Strategy Officer **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Region Superintendents
- Assistant Superintendents, Chief Administrative and Compliance Officer, Chief Budget Officer, Chief Information Officer, Chief Procurement Officer, Controller, Deputy Chief Facilities and Eco-Sustainability Officer, Inspections Officer, Risk and Benefits Officer, Treasurer **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Region Administrative Directors **(alphabetical by last name)**
- District Administrative Directors, Deputy Chief, Miami-Dade Schools Police Department, Economic Development Officer **(alphabetical by last name)**
- District Directors **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Executive Directors **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Directors **(alphabetical by last name)**
- School's Adult Education Principal
- Feeder Pattern Principals **(alphabetical by last name)** (Attendance is optional)
- School Vice Principal
- School Assistant Principals
- Other External Guests

The following order should be followed for introductions: (It is strongly recommended that the principal introduce the platform guests.)

- Board Member of the School
- School Board Chair
- School Board Vice Chair
- School Board Members (alphabetical by last name)
- Superintendent of Schools

- Senior Elected Official of Local Municipality
- Federal Officials (by rank)
- State Officials (by rank)
- Local Officials (by rank and/or alphabetical if there is more than one person of the same rank such as two County Commissioners)
- Provosts and College Presidents (School for Advanced Studies, New World, Alonzo & Tracy Mournings, Mast @ FIU, etc.)
- Guest Speaker(s) and Special Guests **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Chief Auditor, School Board Attorney **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Deputy Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer, Chief Facilities Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Human Capital Officer, Chief Intergovernmental Affairs, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Maintenance and Operations Officer, Chief of Police, Chief of Staff, Chief Strategy Officer **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Region Superintendents
- Assistant Superintendents, Chief Administrative and Compliance Officer, Chief Budget Officer, Chief Information Officer, Chief Procurement Officer, Controller, Deputy Chief Facilities and Eco-Sustainability Officer, Inspections Officer, Risk and Benefits Officer, Treasurer **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Region Administrative Directors **(alphabetical by last name)**
- District Administrative Directors, Deputy Chief, Miami-Dade Schools Police Department, Economic Development Officer **(alphabetical by last name)**
- District Directors **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Executive Directors **(alphabetical by last name)**
- Directors **(alphabetical by last name)**
- School's Adult Education Principal
- Feeder Pattern Principals **(alphabetical by last name)** (Attendance is optional.)
- School Vice Principal
- School Assistant Principals
- Other External Guests

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, extends the courtesy of "The Honorable" to all elected officials. "The Honorable" is used in addressing, orally and in writing, elected officials at the federal, state, county, and city levels. Staff members should not be addressed as "The Honorable" unless they also hold elected offices. "The Honorable" is used before an elected official's name, not title, and may be used to address former elected officials, though without their formal titles. For further explanation, please consult *Protocol Guidelines for Official School Board Events*.

What are the protocol guidelines for the introductions of School Board Members and Board Administrative Assistants at graduation ceremonies?

Any time a member of the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, is in attendance at a graduation, the School Board Member should be introduced publicly at the beginning of the program as indicated on pages 7 and 8. If a School Board Member and his/her Administrative Assistant are in attendance, the protocol is to only introduce the Board Member. In accordance with the District's Protocol Guide for Official School Board Events, School Board Members should be introduced in order of precedence. The order shall be: School Board Chair, School Board Vice-Chair, and School Board Members (in alphabetical order). In the event a School Board Member is not present but the administrative assistant is, the administrative assistant should be introduced as representing the Board Member. Introduce all School Board Members first and then the administrative assistants representing School Board Members. Introductions of Board Members and/or administrative assistants should be done in the following order: Chair, Vice Chair, and Board Members in alphabetical order. Following the introduction of present Board Members, the introduction of administrative assistants representing School Board Members should be completed in the order of their respective Board Members: i.e., the administrative assistant to the Chair first, then the Vice Chair's administrative assistant, then the remaining administrative assistants according to their Board Member's alphabetical ranking.

When addressing a School Board Member in public, use the appropriate title to demonstrate respect for the office. (Example: "Good afternoon, School Board Member Johnson.")

Sample Introductions:

The Honorable (Full Name), Chair of the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

The Honorable (Full Name), Vice-Chair of the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

The Honorable (Full Name), Member of the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

What are some things to remember on graduation day?

- An administrator and/or a faculty member should be assigned to greet the Superintendent if he is to be in attendance.
- Another administrator and/or faculty member should be assigned to greet the School Board Members.
- There should be a designated administrator at the graduation site. This is the name that will be given to School Police.

- A meeting should be held with School Police at the graduation site to establish procedures for the day.
- Someone should be assigned to the VIP Parking area. They will be working in conjunction with the assigned School Police. Faculty should be easily identifiable.
- Some Regions have requested that faculty be placed at the end of each row of graduating seniors.
- Reserved seating should be provided for faculty and other VIP guests.
- It is recommended that you place names on the seats of those to be seated on the stage. The seating plan should follow the list provided by the Division of Athletics, and Activities.
- You may choose to honor designated students by having them lead the processional or sit on the stage. Remember that we have three classifications now: summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude.
- Prior to the beginning of the ceremony, reminders should be given from the stage by a designated individual concerning the proper decorum. These reminders should be given in English and in any other language the school deems appropriate.
- You may find it necessary to arrange for interpreters for the deaf/hard of hearing. (Use FM 7247 for Graduates and FM 7248 for Guests requiring interpreters.)
- If the school's JROTC presents the colors, remind the graduates and the audience that all should remain standing until the colors are retired/posted.
- Individuals chosen to read the names of graduates should be able to pronounce the names correctly.
- Platform guests should be advised to keep their conversation to a minimum so as not to detract from the decorum of the graduation.
- The school may want to consider establishing a graduation help desk.
- Students should be made aware that caps or any other objects are not to be thrown at the conclusion of the ceremony.

What are some tasks to be completed following graduation?

- Provisions must be made for the collection of gowns either at the graduation site or at the school site. Schools must assign a faculty member, other than the Activities Director, to coordinate the collection of gowns at the graduation site.
- Leave the graduation site areas used by the school as neat as possible. Other schools will be following you.
- Send "Thank You" letters to guests and School Board Members who attend.

What are the guidelines concerning posthumous conferring of high school diplomas to parents of deceased students?

- Deceased students who were enrolled in grades 9-12, may be recognized during their graduating class commencement ceremony.
- Recognition of deceased students will not be marked as an official graduation. Therefore, student credits will not be a consideration for parent(s)/guardian(s) participation.
- Seat the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the deceased student(s) in a VIP section located in close proximity to the stage
- At the beginning of the roll call, announce the deceased student's name and have the parent(s)/guardian(s) walk on stage to receive a posthumous diploma on behalf of their child.

What are the guidelines for recognizing graduating seniors who have enlisted in the military?

- Graduating seniors who have enlisted in the military should be recognized during their graduating class commencement ceremony.
- Prior to roll call, the Principal will announce the names of those students who have enlisted in the military, the branch of the military into which they enlisted and ask them to stand and be recognized.

What is the protocol for distribution of Diploma Designation Seals?

- Seals should NOT be affixed to the diploma.
- Seals will be given to students in an envelope inside of the diploma envelope.
- A letter explaining the diploma designations from the Superintendent must be included in each diploma envelope for every graduating senior.
- Contact the Division of Student Services at 305-995-7338, for questions regarding Designation Seals.

What are the procedures to request the services of a sign language interpreter for graduation?

- Schools **MUST** request the services of a sign language interpreter for guests attending graduation ceremonies. Form – Sign Language Interpreter Services Request for Parents and/or Employees (FM 7248) must be completed in its entirety and submitted to the Office of Human Capital Management/ADA Office.
- Should a graduate require the services of a sign language interpreter, Form –Sign Language Interpreter Services Request for K-12 Students (FM 7247) must be completed and submitted to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Programs K-12 Office.
- Forms must be sent to these respective offices no later than 10 business days prior to your ceremony.

Who can be called if you have any questions? If you have any questions, please call District Operations, Division of Athletics, and Activities at 305-275-3714.

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Attachment 1

Activities Directors' Suggested Timeline for Graduation

From *M-DCPS Student Activities Handbook*
Graduation Responsibilities – Pages 96-98

<https://mdcpsathleticsandactivities.net/wp-content/uploads/Graduation-Guidelines-2024-4.pdf>

Graduation planning begins in early October with the ordering of student caps and gowns and continues through the graduation ceremony when financial obligations are finalized. This necessitates the cooperation and coordination of students, faculty, and administration.

The following list includes important items which must be considered and suggested times to accomplish tasks:

1. Request the site, date, and hour of the ceremony from the Division of Athletics, Activities and Accreditation. (October)
2. Students should begin purchasing their cap and gowns through the approved vendor. Additionally, order items for honor students. (Finalization by January)
3. Order buses to transport the band, the chorus, and faculty members to the ceremony as needed. (January)
4. Confirm faculty members and administrators' participation in ceremony and order the faculty gowns. (February)
5. Order flowers/foilage for stage. (February)
6. Arrange for the following: ticket takers, audience control, guest parking, collection of caps and gowns, distribution of diplomas, and delivery of diploma covers to the site. Be certain that each person understands his/her responsibilities and how to perform them. (February)
7. Develop a floor plan for the assigned site and, depending on the site, determine the number of guest tickets that each graduate will receive. Keep in mind that fraudulent tickets may be a problem that arises. Leave empty seats for this possibility. (March)
8. Attend the site meeting for your graduation site. (March)
9. Identify and confirm program participants, e.g., organists, student ushers, and the person(s) to read the graduates' names. (March)

10. Prepare the program, verify the list of graduates, and carefully proof the program for final printing. Submit to Region Office for approval. (March/April)
11. Develop an alternate entry/line-up plan in case of rain. (This can be difficult; call an experienced colleague for assistance.) (March)
12. Identify students and faculty to assist backstage. (March)
13. Design and order tickets to be printed. If fraudulent tickets are a concern, order tickets that are extremely difficult to replicate. Distribute the tickets as close to the ceremony as possible to cut down on the time available to counterfeit them. (March)
14. Maintain constant communication with the school registrar concerning the status of graduates and update the graduation list periodically after April 1st. Ensure the registrar has ordered posthumous diplomas for deceased students, if needed. (April)
15. Communicate, in writing, with the facilities manager at the graduation site to finalize arrangements for the set up of furniture and equipment. (April)
16. Determine the position of each graduate in the processional, the seating arrangements, and the recessional. (May)
17. Pull the gowns for the non-grads. Distribute gowns, name/photo cards (marching cards) to students who will be participating in the ceremony. (May)
18. Make sure that all of the seats available to you for the audience are open and not blocked. If needed, contact the Division of Athletics/Activities and Accreditation for assistance. (May)
19. If your school makes diploma plaques an option for graduates, ensure that you provide a list of the non-grads to the vendor prior to the ceremony so that those plaques are pulled and not sold. (May)
20. Post a sign for all ceremonies being videotaped. The sign should indicate that the event is being videotaped and, that by entering the event, the person is consenting to be videotaped.

HELPFUL HINTS:

1. Use persons familiar with students for diploma distribution, preferably homeroom teachers and/or guidance counselors.
2. Make arrangements for transporting graduation gown boxes to the graduation site. (Only if gowns are collected on-site).
3. Secure the assistance of the speech instructor to work with student program speakers.
4. Secure the assistance of faculty members to maintain order and control in the processional lines, as well as during the ceremony. (They should be seated with students.)
5. Arrange for extra diploma covers, caps, gowns, collars, tassels, and other paraphernalia to be taken to the graduation site.
6. Prepare gift bags for dignitaries to be placed on stage. Each gift bag should contain water, tissues, hand sanitizer, mints and a thank you note.
7. Ensure script is on podium and is labeled with all speeches

Attachment 2

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

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Attachment 3

Disclosure Statement

Dear Parents and Guests:

The Graduates of the Class of 2026 welcome you to our Commencement Exercises. May we request that you allow each one of us our moment of recognition in as dignified a manner as possible.

We request that you not bring items into the graduation site which may detract from the dignity of the ceremony or create any action which interferes with the ceremony. Individuals who cannot comply with this request will be asked to leave the premises.

We earnestly request that you refrain from individual demonstrations of enthusiasm for your particular graduate and that you join us all at the conclusion of the presentation of diplomas with a strong show of pride and congratulations.

Thank you for demonstrating your support for us in giving our ceremony the dignity and honor it richly deserves.

The Graduating Class of 2026

Declaración

Estimados padres de familia e invitados:

Los graduados de la clase del 2026 les damos la bienvenida a nuestra ceremonia de graduación y quisiéramos rogarles que nos permitan disfrutar de este momento de reconocimiento en la forma más digna posible.

Les pedimos que no lleven al lugar donde se celebra la graduación artículos que pudieran disminuir la solemnidad de la ceremonia o que pudieran generar cualquier acción que interfiera con la misma. A las personas que no puedan responder a esta solicitud se les pedirá que abandonen el local.

Les rogamos encarecidamente que se abstengan de hacer demostraciones individuales de entusiasmo por su graduado en particular y que se unan a todos nosotros al concluir la presentación de los diplomas en una gran expresión de orgullo y felicitaciones.

Les agradecemos su apoyo a nuestros esfuerzos por proporcionar a nuestra ceremonia la dignidad y el honor que tanto merece.

Los graduados de la clase del 2026

Avètisman

Chè Paran ak Envite:

Klas Gradyasyon 2026 la kontan wè nou nan seremoni pwomosyon sa a. Silvouplè pèmèt nou chak jwi moman sa a avèk tout diyite posib.

N ap mande pou nou pa rantr nan oditoryòm nan ak okenn objè ki kab deranje diyite seremoni a oubyen kreye okenn aksyon k ap distrè dewoulman seremoni a. N ap oblije mande moun ki pakab konfòme yo ak demand sa a pou yo kite sal la.

N ap mande nou seryezman pou n pa aplodi yon gradye an patikilye jiskaske tout gradye yo resevwa diplòm yo pou nou aplodi tout ansanm avèk anpil fòs pou nou montre fyète ak felisitasyon nou.

Mèsi pou sipò nou nan bay seremoni a onè e respè li merite.

Klas Gradyasyon 2026 la

Attachment 4

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin, including actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, or citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, and national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. M-DCPS does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any education program or activity that it operates as required by Title IX. M-DCPS also does not discriminate on the basis of sex in admissions or employment.

Age Discrimination Act of 1975 - prohibits discrimination based on age in programs or activities.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40 years old.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended - prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against qualified students with disabilities.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations, and telecommunications.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA) - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, gender, national origin, religion, marital status, or disability in public education.

Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) - prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because of genetic information.

Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2002 – No public school shall deny equal access to or a fair opportunity for groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after school hours, or discriminate against any group officially affiliated with Boy Scouts of America or any other youth or community group listed in Title 36 as a patriotic society.

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4312 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.

In Addition:

School Board Policies 1362, 3362, 4362, and 5517 - Prohibit harassment and discrimination against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of age, citizenship status, color, disability, ethnic or national origin, FMLA, gender, gender identity, genetic information, linguistic preference, marital status, political beliefs, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, social and family background, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation for engaging in a protected civil rights activity is also prohibited.

For additional information about Title IX or any other discrimination/harassment concerns, contact the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights or:

Office of Civil Rights Compliance (CRC) District Director/Title IX Coordinator
155 N.E. 15th Street, Suite P104E Miami, Florida 33132
Phone: (305) 995-1580 TDD: (305) 995-2400
Email: crc@dadeschools.net Website: <https://hrdadeschools.net/civilrights>

Attachment 5

(Not to be included in program)

From *The Manual of Internal Fund Accounting*
Section IV
Chapter 2 – Fundraising Activities
Page 2-7

15. Recordings of student performances made in school facilities, or at school functions shall only be used for study purposes and may not be offered for general sale to the public as a fundraiser unless the following provisions are met:

- a) The principal deems the recording of such performance to be of educational benefit to students.
- b) For recordings made with school owned equipment (i.e. video production class/group), the materials for the recordings of such events are purchased by the school utilizing available revenue in the appropriate internal fund accounts and following proper purchasing procedures in accordance with the Manual of Internal Fund Accounting for Elementary and Secondary Schools.
- c) Appropriate fundraising policies and procedures and required forms are used.
- d) Such student performances are limited to the recordings of school ceremonies, school graduations, and school arts performances.
- e) Proper releases, using required forms, must be signed by students and parents evidencing consent to participating in an event that will be recorded, and retained for audit purposes. If individual releases cannot be obtained, proper notification should be visibly posted at the entrance notifying attendees that the event will be recorded.
- f) For recordings made with school owned equipment, all fundraising proceeds generated from the sale of the recordings will be administered through the school's internal fund and may be utilized to purchase, repair and maintain recording equipment and related supplies, as well as to subsidize expenditures for student activities of the student group conducting the fundraiser.
- g) For recordings made by vendor, all bid and contract requirements must be met.

Compliance with copyright requirements applying to recordings or compositions not in the public domain is the responsibility of the school, college, or educational organization under whose auspices the recording is made per Board Policy 5722– *School-Sponsored Publications, Productions, and Performances*.

Attachment 6

**This event is being
videotaped.**

**By entering the event,
you are
giving your permission
to be
recorded and to have
your
likeness used in the final
product.**

