



BOARD POLICY ON SENIOR COMMENCEMENT

PURPOSE

The Board of Directors of John Adams Academy recognizes the senior commencement as the capstone event of every scholar's Academy experience. The academic and character requirements to graduate from John Adams Academy exceed State graduation requirements, develop graduates into servant leaders, and prepare graduates for success in any endeavor they choose. Therefore, completion of a John Adams Academy diploma is a significant accomplishment and occasion for celebration in a manner befitting the Academy, graduates, family members, and friends.

The Board Policy on Senior Commencement and the associated guidelines that follow, exist to ensure the collective consistency among all John Adams Academy campuses and programs to act in accordance with long-standing academic traditions; to maintain the formality and dignity of the occasion; to align the commencement and related activities to the Vision & Mission and Core Values of the Academy; and to the principles and essential elements contained herein.

Senior commencement is a signature event that is a reflection of our entire network of schools and is to be held with the highest attention to detail and excellence. As a signature event, it is executed by site/program administration under the direction and mentorship of the Superintendent. Campuses will work with the Superintendent or designee to ensure that the guidelines are followed in order to achieve a successful event for the benefit of all parties.

APPLIES TO

The Board Policy on Senior Commencement applies to all John Adams Academy graduation related events, whether the event is to be held on campus, off campus, or online. As a TK-12 program, a diploma is only conferred upon successful completion of twelfth grade and all associated graduation requirements. Therefore, no “graduation ceremony” is authorized or allowed for any other grade.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN GRADUATION ACTIVITIES

In order to participate in graduation activities, Scholars graduating from John Adams Academy will complete all graduation requirements listed in the Family Scholar Handbook, John Adams Academy Quill, Board Policy on Senior Commencement, and any other relevant Academy policy or procedure pertaining to graduation requirements.

Seniors will not receive their diploma until all graduation requirements have been met.

EVENT LOCATION

The Senior Commencement ceremony may take place on campus, or at an off-site location that offers appropriate space for the required layout and size of the event and the ability to meet the technology needs of the event. The event location will be approved by the Secondary Principals. Costs associated with leasing facilities, equipment, or staffing are borne by the individual school site or program. Any contract or lease agreement must be approved and signed by the Superintendent.

EVENT DESIGN

The look and feel of any John Adams Academy event will be guided by three basic principles:

1. Elegance and Refinement

Any event associated with the Academy will have a high-level of professionalism and refinement. The Academy has a rich tradition of hosting beautiful events that have the right mix of detail and nuance to ensure any John Adams Academy event is a special occasion.

2. Appreciation of our National Heritage

Every John Adams Academy event should be a celebration of freedom and the great privilege and responsibility of liberty. Every John Adams Academy event should be a celebration of such freedoms. All events will display the American flag and begin with a flag ceremony.

3. Practicality

All Academy events must be guided by the thoughtful concern for practicality and simplicity. Extravagance is not a virtue. The principles of frugality and stewardship are essential for maximizing the participant's experience and maximizing the Academy's resources. Beautiful and memorable events can be created while adhering to these principles.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Each Senior Commencement will have a keynote address. The keynote address is provided for, not only because it is expected in a commencement ceremony, but due to the importance of inspiring the graduates and connecting the celebration to the Vision & Mission of the Academy.

Keynote Speaker

A commencement ceremony keynote speaker shall be a person of virtue, a model servant leader, that will represent themselves and the Academy well. They shall be an exemplar of the 10 Core Values and have a body of work that demonstrates alignment to the Academy's Vision & Mission, and America's founding principles as embodied in the Declaration of Independence and Constitution.

Selection and Approval of Keynote Speaker

The Secondary Principal, or their designee, shall identify a short list of potential keynote speakers that meet the criterion listed in this policy and present that list to a committee comprised of the Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Superintendent Cabinet. The committee will review the list of submitted names and determine if a submitted name is approved for invitation to serve as a keynote speaker.

Names of possible keynote speakers may also be provided by the members of the committee directly. The names of any potential speakers generated directly by the

committee would then be provided to the Secondary Principal for final approval prior to an invitation being extended.

SCHOLAR SPEAKERS

The Board encourages the inclusion of a speaker or speakers from among the graduating scholars. Scholar speakers are to be selected from among the John and Abigail Adams Award Recipients, Valedictorian, and Salutatorian.

The John and Abigail Adams Award recipients, Valedictorian(s), and Salutatorian(s) will be publicly recognized during commencement ceremonies and may be selected to give a speech during the commencement ceremony. Receiving one of these awards does not guarantee a speaking role at the ceremony. When planning the commencement, consideration should be given to not unduly elongating the event or burdening the audience by including too many speakers.

Selection and Approval of Scholar Speakers

Upon receiving the award, the John and Abigail Adams Award recipients, Valedictorian(s), and Salutatorian(s) will be asked to prepare and submit a speech. The speeches will first be reviewed by campus administration who will provide any necessary mentoring for strengthening and improving the speech to ensure it is representative of the scholar's best abilities and appropriate for the occasion. At the deadline for receiving final speeches, campus administration will create a recommendation for who they would like to invite as a scholar speaker for graduation and submit the name or names along with copies of the final drafts of speeches to a committee comprised of the Chairman of the Board of Directors, and the Superintendent Cabinet. The committee will review the speeches and determine if a submitted name is approved for invitation to serve as a scholar speaker.

ACADEMIC REGALIA / ATTIRE

All commencement participants are required to wear Academy approved regalia to participate in the ceremony.

For graduates, the approved regalia is:

- Purchased/leased cap with tassel from Academy approved vendor

- Purchased/leased gown from Academy approved vendor
- Academy branded white stole provided by the Academy
- Any academic/subject cords or medals directly awarded by John Adams Academy or approved academic institutions (NHS medals, choir medals) that have been approved to be worn at commencement.

Graduates are to order their cap with tassel and gown directly from the Academy approved vendor. The Academy will provide each graduate with an approved Academy stole. Scholars shall only wear the Academy approved stole, no alternates.

There shall be no modifications, alterations, additions or decorations made to the cap, gown, tassel or stole. Required and approved attire must be worn to remain eligible for walking across the stage during the commencement ceremony or to be photographed.

ACADEMY APPROVED AWARDS

John Adams Academy graduates will be eligible to receive the following Board approved awards and may wear cords, pins, or other approved regalia at the graduation ceremony to identify their achievement:

- John and Abigail Adams Award – a male and female recipient receive a certificate and medal
- Valedictorian(s) - receive certificate and medal
- Salutatorian(s) - receive certificate and medal
- Subject cords
- GPA cords
- Extracurricular cords and/or medals (NHS, Athletics, Scholar Government)
- Core Value Awards (certificate)
- Academic Achievement Award – receive medal (*Recognition of scholars completing their K-12 education entirely at John Adams Academy*)

Subject Cords

Subject cords are given to the top graduate in each of the following subjects selected by the subject teachers and/or campus administrators. The following subject cords are approved by the Board:

- Science - Orange
- Mathematics - Red

- Humanities - Light Blue
- Foreign Language - Green
- Fine Arts (Music, Art, Drama) - Purple
- Physical Education - Teal
- Yearbook - Black/White braided

GPA Cords

GPA cords are awarded to scholars based on academic GPA achievements. The following GPA cords are approved by the Board:

- Gold (4.0+)
- Silver (3.8-3.99)
- Bronze (3.5-3.79)

Extracurricular Cords

Extracurricular cords are provided to graduates who are members of Board approved extracurricular groups such as National Honor Society, Advanced Vocal Ensemble, Orchestra, Athletics, Scholar Government, etc.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent, or Designee, shall develop and institute Guidelines for Senior Commencement that are in alignment with this policy and distribute the guidelines to the campuses for implementation. In addition to the requirements contained within this policy, the Guidelines for Senior Commencement shall include, but not be limited to, guidance on the following:

- Design, Staging and Branding of the Event
- Attendance at the Event
- Attendance by John Adams Academy Board of Trustees and John Adams Academies Foundation Board
- Guests of Graduates / Ticketing for Guests
- Academic Regalia and approved attire for participants and attendees
- Conducting of Rehearsal
- Ceremony Run of Show
- Printing of Programs
- Recording of the Event

- Academy Approved Awards
- Senior Awards Ceremony
- Opportunities for Customization of Ceremony

The Superintendent or designee shall keep the governing board informed of the progress and details of any senior commencement related activities and ensure compliance with this policy.