

STUDENT ACTIVITIES  
COMMENCEMENT

FMH-R

VOLUNTEER  
SERVICE HOURS

The following guidelines address the requirement that all Ysleta ISD students earn a total of 80 volunteer services hours in order to participate in commencement ceremonies at the conclusion of their senior year. It is recommended that students earn a minimum of 20 volunteer service hours per year.

Volunteer hour requirements shall be adjusted to a total of 40 volunteer hours for all students graduating in the 2021-2022 school year due to limited accessibility of volunteer facilities related to COVID-19. The requirement for volunteer service hours will be reevaluated beginning in 2022-2023.

DEFINITION

Volunteer service to the community shall be defined as service performed for approved persons, organizations or agencies outside of the student's home and/or family. The services shall be performed without monetary compensation and hours shall be accumulated in the form of time spent. Services shall not be performed as part of the regular school day, unless students are participating in a school sponsored school/community service project. Volunteer service hours earned through participation in school-based student organizations that perform community service is permissible.

TIMELINE

Students entering the Ysleta ISD after the beginning of each new school year are subject to fulfilling the accumulated volunteer service hour requirement as follows:

- Students may begin accumulating service hours for each school year after the last day of instruction for the previous year, and prior to May 1, of the current school year.
- The superintendent may approve student volunteer service hours beyond May 1 and up to the day before graduation ceremonies based on extenuating circumstances on a case by case basis.

TRANSFER  
STUDENTS

- A student enrolling before January 1 of the current school year must complete all accumulated volunteer community service hour requirements as if they had entered on the first day of school (i.e. student entering before January 1 of 11<sup>th</sup> grade would be required to earn 40 accumulated hours of volunteer service to be eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies at the end of their senior year.
- Students in grades 9-12 transferring from one high school to another within the district will also transfer their volunteer service hours accumulated to that point.
- Students excused through an Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee will not have to complete the required

hours.

**MONITORING** Each campus shall designate one person per grade level to monitor the documentation of service hours using appropriate forms (see Exhibit) and ensure the inclusion of accumulated hours in the student's Personal Graduation Plan each year.

The accumulation of volunteer service hours for seniors will be monitored throughout the year and verified during senior clearance.

Seniors earning at least 300 approved volunteer service hours prior to graduation ceremonies their senior year will be eligible to wear a special cord with their graduation gown.

**TRANSPORTATION** Transportation may be provided by the campus for student groups to participate in volunteer community service, at the principal's discretion.

**PARENT NOTIFICATION** Parents shall be notified of the volunteer service requirement at the beginning of each school year using multiple forms of communication, beginning no later than the second week of school. Parent notification shall include, but not be limited to:

- Letter(s) from the district
- Flyers
- Posters
- Announcements
- Broadcast phone calls
- District webpage/campus websites
- Registration packets
- Student handbook

**COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES** The commencement programs for the District will be conducted within the following guidelines:

- A. A student is not required to participate in the commencement program in order to receive a diploma. Those who wish to participate will be required to read the commencement regulation and sign a copy of the student participation statement.
- B. Early graduates may participate in graduation exercises at the end of the school year provided all arrangements have been made and approval by the principal has been obtained.
- C. Early graduates may have their high school diplomas mailed to them if they elect not to participate in the graduation exercises.

- D. Blank diplomas may be issue at the commencement ceremony if:
  - 1. Official diplomas are not received in time to facilitate accurate distribution, or
  - 2. The school administration deems blank diplomas appropriate to maintain decorum throughout the ceremony.
  
- E. In the interest of providing both a ceremonial and expedient graduation, the following procedures are recommended:
  - 1. Recognize scholarship recipients as a group
  - 2. Provide individual recognition in the graduation program
  - 3. Expedite processional and recessional
  - 4. Assure that the program flows smoothly without unnecessary pauses and interruptions
  - 5. Limit the number of musical selections offered
  - 6. Choir/band/orchestra seniors encouraged to limit their participation of that of a graduate only
  - 7. Include the presentation of colors
  
- F. Board members will assist in congratulating graduates

**EXPECTATIONS OF CONDUCT**

Any candidate for graduation who behaves in any manner resulting in the disruption of the graduation ceremony or who demeans or degrades the ceremony will immediately lose the privilege of further participation in the graduation ceremony and will be removed immediately. Any other student (other than a graduate) who behaves inappropriately will be removed from the ceremony and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken by the school administration. The principal may delay or cancel the graduation ceremony if deemed necessary by inappropriate student/audience conduct. Other arrangements would then be made for distribution of diplomas.

- A. Misconduct, distractions, defiance of commencement procedures, and/or lack of compliance with dress requirements shall not be allowed. Meetings with students shall be held to ensure understanding of the rules. Parents will also be notified of expectations of graduates.
  
- B. Students shall comply with the commencement dress code. Inspection shall be conducted before the processional. Those students in violation shall be summarily removed from the program participation.
  
- C. All policies relating to student conduct that are applicable in

the school shall remain in force until the end of all commencement activities.

- D. No smoking will be permitted. Any indication that a candidate for graduation is under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be grounds for immediate removal from participation in the ceremony.

GRADUATION  
CONTENT

The following content shall be included in all graduation exercises:

- A. Processional
- B. Pledge of Allegiance and/or National Anthem
- C. Valedictory and Salutatory Address
- D. Presentation of Awards and Special Recognition of Top Ten Students and Top Ten Percent of Graduating Class
- E. Certification of Graduates
- F. Presentation of Diploma
- G. Recessional and/or Alma Mater