

Nancy Kleine

Port Graham

Nanwalek

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)?

I would suggest a modified approach. In Nanwalek or Port Graham, we would applaud/include ANYONE who has graduated from anywhere, but we are a bit out of context for this question.

Having been at Connections for years, it was a struggle for students who had ties to a school, but weren't allowed to "walk" with their peers.

I would suggest that they be included, but that they have to have some predetermined number of credits at that school during their high school.

Also, for students who go to APU's Early Honors program, they should absolutely be allowed to graduate at their home school (this was not the case previously – not sure now).

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)?

If the suspension falls during the day of graduation (any amount), I don't see how the student could be allowed on campus.

Otherwise, in my context, I would be in favor of letting the student participate (if suspension had been earlier, less than 10 days). I might feel differently if I were in the larger schools.

Doug Waclawski

Homer High School

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)?

No. Absolutely not. Every school including connections have their own graduations that they can attend. Each school has their own culture, shared experiences and own requirements. Every student can choose to go to any school they want to attend and understand they will graduate with that school. We have several students who come to Homer their senior year so they can walk with us which I support. This proposal would take away from the students who worked hard to get a Homer High School Diploma. Quite frankly, this is like someone walking off the street and wanting to graduate at Kenai. This will lessen what it means to graduate from any school. I don't want to take away from what other schools have accomplished, but they have no place and there is no meaning to a connections student graduating from Homer High.

Homer High School will offer our gym or theater if connections or other schools want to have a local graduation.

Many of my parents would be very upset if the first proposal was approved.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)?

Homer High has not had a major behavior problem or major act of vandalism before graduation since I have been at HHS and that is because the graduation ceremony is not a right, but a privilege. Again, only students who have done something major will lose this privilege. For small issues, we make students make reparations, such as cleaning up their mess before they allowed to graduate. If they choose not to do this, they won't walk. I can see major issues, fights and vandalism if students feel they can get away with it. Senior pranks have become a fun rite of passage and an act of creativity because no one wants to lose their graduation privilege.

I see no benefit for either of these proposals and I think they would actually have a negative effect on our brick and mortar schools.

Michael Wojciak

Tim Whip

Voznesenka

K- Selo

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)?

Both Whip and I feel that if a student has been at a particular school for most of their years and would like to graduate from that school it would be fine. However, as an example, I wouldn't want a student who has gone to Homer for all of the education coming out to Voz just for the ceremony. There should be some discretion, as there is now, regarding where a student attends their graduation ceremony.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)?

Both Whip and I agree, with reservations..... (ex. Are there serious concerns about the student being extremely disruptive at the ceremony?)

Trevan Walker

Seward High School

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)? This might be a bit moot at Seward High...I've not had any requests for Connections kids to graduate with Seward High. We've always operated by the "last semester before graduation" rule and it seems to be working. I would be willing to accommodate kids, on a case-by-case basis, with I-Team and parental input.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)? This would create conflicts with our ability to enforce other board policies. The other thing is that we run several mandatory graduation practices in the days leading up to the ceremony. This could create a significant disruption if I had a suspended student here these senior activities in the days and hours before graduation...

Maybe if the student was directly supervised by a parent for all of it?

Richard Bartolowits

Connections

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)?

From the Connections perspective, I do like the idea that students can choose to walk at any school. The reality is, most would choose the school they feel the most association with. A scenario that affects Connections students is that they might go to two classes at SOHI, be four year SOHI letter winners in football, basketball, choir, etc..., but not be allowed to walk with their friends and teammates. This has led to some students dropping from Connections to re-enroll at SOHI so they can walk with their comrades. (I'm using SOHI as the example, the same happens at the other large schools.

Many of our small schools already allow students to walk when they complete their requirements with Connections. The Russian villages commonly invite graduates to participate in graduation ceremonies when they graduate from Connections.

Historically, when I was in school, we had students who attended Ninilchik grades 1 through 10, went to SOHI when that school opened, then came back to walk with their friends at Ninilchik.

A parallel could also be made with the University of Alaska system. I earned a degree from UAA and walked at the KPC graduation ceremony.

Some of the high school students that come to Connections do so to take advantage of the ability to use the homeschool allotment, combined with Jump Start, to pay for a year or two of college. Those are some of our (KPBSD's) most college and career ready students.

I like to think of KPBSD students as OUR students. I would like to see our graduation policy treat them as OUR students.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)?

I have less strong feelings around this issue. Without hearing arguments on both sides, I would lean toward allowing principal's some leeway. My experience has seen this type of exclusion used sparingly. There may be other evidence of which I am unaware.

Doug Hayman

Hope

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)? Yes and no. Yes if they attended the majority of the HS credits at that school, no if they have not.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)? No. It should be any suspension. Perhaps a clause allowing the building administrator to make allowances if the situation warrants it. If the student was suspended, especially a day or three before graduation, it is not likely that their state of mind is a controlled one and it is entirely likely that the student could have a “one last Hurrah” in mind to display at the ceremony. This may be a crude example, but a bar tender is not likely to invite someone back in the bar that has been kicked out, for last call for drinks. Just sayin’, this one is completely illogical and caters to the trouble maker, not to the hundreds who have followed all the rules.

Alan Fields

KCHS

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)?

One of the advantages of the brick and mortar high school is the social and traditional high school experience. This is one of the things that draws students and parents to our school. The graduation ceremony is one of those social and traditional components that our school may have and offer that other programs do not. Being a part of our school and thus being recognized in our school graduation ceremony are things that go hand in hand.

Also, I do not believe that this is logistically possible. There is a great deal of planning and communication that goes into a graduation ceremony with students and parents. If students do not attend a school they would miss those meetings and necessary communication. Also we must determine who is meeting the graduation requirements to participate in the ceremony and be presented a diploma. Not having students in our school presents another obstacle to determining if students have met the grad requirements and a short timeline for preparing programs.

If we want to maintain a quality meaningful event for our students, parents, and communities we should not remove the established relationship and ability for planning/communicating from our schools.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)?

Large numbers of students are not being excluded from participation in graduation ceremonies. I am struggling to recall a time when a student has been excluded in the past decade. The threat of exclusion does however deter a great deal of inappropriate behavior from occurring at a time when there is very little consequence that is available. I believe that our school principals in consultation with our district administration are the best professionals to determine what reasons if any a student should be excluded from participating in an extracurricular event, such as the graduation ceremony.

Tim Vlasak

Director of K-12 Schools/Assessments/Federal Programs

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)? No. The complexity of planning the graduation ceremony doesn't need added complexity. And Then does a student get to attend both..who monitoring, and who making sure they actually have the graduation requirements. The Diploma is from a specific school. To the best of my knowledge we have historically worked with principals and accommodated in many cases. Is this just about a specific school/principal and more than just graduation (dances, activities. Etc)? Then lets address that instead of changing policy.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)? This needs to be a judgment call of the principal. Not all suspensions should exclude participation in graduation ceremony, even 10 day suspensions. And some 1 day suspension definitely justify not participating. This is further complicated by the fact that we have graduation ceremonies starting at least a week before school actually ends.

Alan Haskins

Susan B. English

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)?
At Susan B. English Connection Students are welcomed to attend the graduation ceremony.

In my opinion it would be difficult to make sure that diplomas are in the correct place. Also, what if all the seniors decided to attend the earliest graduation ceremony? Maybe all ceremonies should be on the same day.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)?

This is a tough one, if the policy is changed to allow students with discipline infractions to participate, whereas now, that same student would miss all school functions for the duration of the discipline, ie basketball game, football game etc. That may create a double standard, and as we know Seniors will get the attitude even more if they know it won't affect them at the end of the year, it doesn't matter if I am insubordinate, get into a fight or flat tell a teacher off.

Pamala Potter

Tebughna

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)?

Yes, I think they should be allowed to graduate from the school of their choice. We are allowing students this year who attended other schools within/outside our school district to "walk" with us, even though they are walking in their own "present-day" school's graduation, also. We all want to celebrate with them their fabulous accomplishment.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)?

Yes. Exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies should be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions. The student should not be receiving "double jeopardy". They have worked hard for 13 years

and have earned this recognition and celebration, in my opinion.

Jeff Ambrosier

Ninilchik

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)? Absolutely not. I can only assume that other students have a similar sense of school pride and if kids can just pick and choose who to sit with during graduation then I think the experience will be watered down. I turn down 3-4 requests a year for IDEA and/or Connections students to sit with us. I'm losing enrollment to Home School as it stands and I think we keep a few kids just because they know if they move to Connections then they can't walk with us.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)? If we want to put into place a system of checks and balances so another principal looks at the info if a senior is suspended right before graduation I'm fine with that. I can't imagine any of our principals keeping a senior from walking unless it was warranted.

Dan Carstens

Nikiski High School

1. No. Students make a choice as to what school they attend and should not have the option of graduating at any school in the district.
2. This is a tricky one. I know that we work with each student individually and typically do not have something like this happening (one time in 12 years). We have seniors sign a graduation agreement at the beginning of the year with one part explaining that if they are in suspension status, then they will not be allowed to walk. As much as I understand the desire to have all schools act the same, I think we need some autonomy here. I don't think any of our administrators are looking to catch kids doing bad things and if a student is in suspension status, then there is a good reason for it.

Tony Graham

Soldotna High School

- 1) Should a KPBSD student who meets District Graduation Requirements be allowed to attend a graduation ceremony of their choice (at any school)?

No.

Each school is unique even though we are a part of the KPBSD. Students have a choice as to where they want to attend. If they choose to go to KCHS and live in Soldotna, they are allowed. If a student wishes to graduate from a specific school, they should attend that school.

- 2) Should exclusion from participation in graduation ceremonies be limited to only serious disciplinary suspensions (10 days or more)?

No.

Graduation ceremony is a privilege and not a right. I view this no different than bus transportation.