

## **5461 GRADUATION EXERCISES**

An appropriate public ceremony of high school commencement shall take place annually at a time recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Board. The annual graduation ceremony is a joyous occasion that marks the end of a student's formal education in the Westfield Public Schools. The commencement exercises also marks the beginning of the pupil's life beyond high school. This important occasion requires decorum and respectful participation by students and guests.

Graduation shall not occur prior to the completion of the 180 days of instruction.

### **Guidelines for Graduation Year Activities**

Pupil participation in graduation activities will require conduct of the highest caliber in all situations. Only students who have met all the graduation requirements in Policy 5460 will be permitted to participate in the graduation exercises.

The high school principal can exclude a student from graduation activities for the following reasons:

- A. consistent involvement in disciplinary actions
- B. threats and or assaults on other students or staff members
- C. disrespect for the authority of teachers and administrators

A student suspended by the high school principal from graduation exercises may appeal the suspension to the Superintendent for a final decision.

When a pupil or his/her parents/guardians experiences financial hardship and are unable to pay the costs of participation in graduation ceremonies, the Board will assume the cost for the cap and gown, yearbook and other expenses determined by the Board. Financial hardship shall be defined by the eligibility standards for free and reduced price meals under the state school lunch program.

The Board reserves the right to withhold a diploma and transcripts from a pupil who has outstanding financial obligations to the school district such as book fines or damages to school property.