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## Policy of the Plattsburgh City School District Regarding Participation in Graduation Ceremonies by Students with Disabilities

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The Board of Education of the Plattsburgh City School District recognizes that students with disabilities, receiving special education and related or other services pursuant to an Individualized Education Program (IEP) as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Commissioner's Regulations at 200.1(zz), must be afforded an opportunity for participation in graduation ceremonies and activities with their high school graduating class, provided they qualify to receive a skills and achievement commencement credential or a career development commencement credential within four years of commencing high school.

### **Definition:**

High School Graduating Class – for purposes of this policy, a student's high school graduating class is the twelfth grade class with which the student with a disability entered into ninth grade.

### **Criteria:**

A student with a disability who has (1) completed four years of high school attendance; (2) is receiving special education and related services through an individualized education program (IEP) pursuant to state and federal law; and (3) will continue to receive such services between the ages of 18 and 21, may participate in a district-wide formal graduation ceremony and all related activities with their high school graduating class; provided (4) the Student is eligible to be awarded either a skills and achievement commencement credential (SACC) or a career development and occupational studies (CDOS) commencement credential at the time of the graduation ceremony.

Participation in graduation events and activities by a student with a disability with their designated high school graduating class is *optional*, not mandatory.

A student with a disability's participation in graduation ceremonies and events pursuant to this Policy shall **not** preclude or limit the student's continuing eligibility to attend school in the District and to receive special education supports, related services and transition services while pursuing their local or regents diploma or other exiting credentials, provided the student remains a resident of the district, continues to be a student with a disability receiving services through an IEP, and has not completed the school year in which he or she turned 21.

### **Annual Notification:**

Annual written notification will be provided to all eligible students with disabilities and their parents or guardians regarding the District's policy and procedures regarding graduation participation. Such notification will include a reference to this policy. The student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified in the Fall of the school year in which the student with a disability's designated high school class will graduate. Such notice shall include applicable deadlines to advise parents and students of the date by which they must indicate their preference to participate in the ceremony with their designated high school class, as well as the manner in which such notice must be made.