

# ACLU

Idaho

## STUDENT RIGHTS

### TRIBAL, CULTURAL, & RELIGIOUS OBJECTS AT GRADUATION



## DO I HAVE RIGHTS WHEN IT COMES TO WHAT I WEAR AT GRADUATION?

**Yes**—Under the First Amendment, you may have a right to wear tribal, cultural, or religious objects at graduation, especially if your school allows other types of adornment for students' caps or gowns. You may also be protected under Title VI (a federal law), if your school is federally funded and its graduation policies disproportionately and negatively affect students of a particular race, ethnicity, or national origin.

## CAN MY SCHOOL PROHIBIT RELIGIOUS OR CULTURAL ADORNMENTS AT GRADUATION?

**Not likely**—Your school can only prohibit your right to wear objects of religious or cultural significance at graduation if it can prove the item will likely cause a substantial disruption of or material interference with the graduation ceremony. See [Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503 \(1969\)](#).

## WHAT CAN I DO IF MY SCHOOL LIMITS MY TRIBAL, CULTURAL, OR RELIGIOUS OBJECTS TO GRADUATION?

**Write a letter to your school.** Explain your rights, the significance of what you want to wear, and how the graduation policy impacts you.  
**Write to the ACLU of Idaho.** We want to hear about your experiences: [www.acluidaho.org/en/resources/report-civil-liberties-violation](http://www.acluidaho.org/en/resources/report-civil-liberties-violation).  
**File a U.S. Department of Education complaint.**  
[www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html)

