



# Wicomico County Board of Education

## Student Dress Code Procedure

### I. Purpose

The purpose of the Wicomico County Board of Education (WCBOE) Student Dress Code Procedure is to create and support a positive school climate of respect for self and others, reduce the occurrence of discipline problems, and maintain safety and order in the school so that effective teaching and learning may take place. Schools may choose to participate in a consistent attire program to which this same dress code procedure applies.

### II. Responsibilities of School, Staff, Administrators and Students

#### A. The responsibilities of the school include:

1. Foster academic achievement,
2. Create and maintain a school environment that is safe, orderly, and conducive to learning,
3. Promote and support positive community standards and values such as civility, respect for others, self-respect, citizenship and other constructive character traits and behaviors.

#### B. The responsibilities of the students include:

1. Choose their attire,
2. Arrange their personal appearance,
3. Maintain their personal hygiene in a manner that is safe, healthy, non-offensive, and conducive to the educational process.

#### C. The responsibilities of the staff members include:

1. Report violations of the Student Dress Code Policy and Procedure through visual identification without physical measurement or touch in any manner,
2. Respectfully address students who are out of compliance with the policy and procedure,
3. Ensure application of the Student Dress Code Policy and Procedure for physical education classes,
4. Maintain an awareness of attire related to gang affiliation so that the Student Dress Code Policy and Procedure can be implemented effectively.

#### D. The responsibilities of the administrators include:

1. Investigate reports of violations of the Student Dress Code Policy and Procedure,
2. Encourage students to make better choices in attire,
3. Assign appropriate consequences for infractions,
4. Apply the specific units of measure for widths and lengths as provided in the policy to ensure that the policy is measurable and to alleviate misinterpretations of the policy
5. Ensure application of the Student Dress Code Policy and Procedure for physical education classes,
6. Maintain an awareness of attire related to gang affiliation so that the Student Dress Code Policy and Procedure can be implemented effectively,
7. Establish and communicate guidelines for sports and extra-curricular uniforms

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- worn during the school day,
8. Maintain ultimate discretion for the decisions concerning any dress code issues which are addressed or inferred in this procedure.

## III. Exceptions

- A. Principals may grant exceptions to the dress code for disabilities, medical conditions or sincerely held religious beliefs if such accommodations are reasonable and do not pose a hardship for the school.
- B. Such exceptions may only be granted when supported by appropriate documentation including medical documentation, such as a doctor's note, or letter from the student's religious authority or authoritative body.
- C. Principals may also grant exceptions for specific school-sponsored events or situations.
- D. In the event of a public health crisis, or state or federal mandates, masks or other personal protective equipment may be required for wear as advised by public entities.

## IV. Dress Code Criteria

### A. Head Coverings and Related Items

1. The following head coverings and related items may not be worn in buildings:
  - a. Hats
  - b. Bandanas
  - c. Visors
  - d. Hoods
  - e. Sunglasses
  - f. Curlers, picks or combs
  - g. Anything deemed gang related.
2. Headbands should not be wider than one and one-half (1 ½) inches.

### B. Face Coverings

1. Students must wear approved masks for health reasons when required by WCPS.
2. Unless it is for a documented health reason or a public health crisis, students may not wear a mask, hood, or device by which any portion of the face is hidden, concealed, or covered as to conceal the identity of the wearer on school property.

### C. Tops

The following criteria are used to identify acceptable tops that can be worn in schools:

1. Cover the entire back and shoulders, including tank-style tops; razorback style tops are inappropriate and not permitted to be worn,
2. Cover the midriff and back when sitting or standing,
3. Be of sufficient thickness so that the undergarments cannot be seen,
4. Fit modestly so that cleavage is covered (as measured by a horizontal line across the top of the armpit),
5. Cover undergarments completely (including bra straps, muscle shirts, and camisoles),

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6. Fit so they are not tight to the skin or overly baggy.

## D. Bottoms

The following criteria are used to identify acceptable bottoms that can be worn in schools:

1. All bottoms must
  - a. Cover undergarments at all times,
  - b. Be of safe length (cannot drag on floor),
  - c. Be worn no lower than the natural waistline,
  - d. Remain at natural waistline without assistance other than a belt or suspenders. (measured by student placing hands on hips),
  - e. Not resemble what is considered bedroom attire,
  - f. Fit so they are not tight to the skin or overly baggy unless appropriately covered.
2. Skirts, dresses and jumpers must:
  - a. Be no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the knee while standing (width of a 3" X 5" index card),
  - b. Be no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the knee even when worn with leggings or tights.
3. Skorts and shorts must:
  - a. Be no shorter than five (5) inches above the top of the knee while standing (length of a 3" X 5" index card),
  - b. Be no shorter than five (5) inches above the top of the knee even when worn with leggings or tights.

## E. Outerwear

1. Outerwear is defined as jackets, coats and other related items made specifically for outdoor use.
2. These must be removed upon entering the building and stored appropriately.
3. Principals may alter this requirement as necessary for the specific conditions within the school.

## F. Footwear

The following criteria are used to identify acceptable footwear that can be worn in schools:

1. Must be worn at all times,
2. Fit secure enough to the foot for safe movement,
3. Not resemble what is considered a bedroom slipper,
4. Have a hard or rubber sole,
5. Not have such a high heel as to cause concern for safe movement throughout the school,
6. Be appropriate to the student's educational program (i.e. steel-toed shoes for construction classes, tennis shoes/sneakers for physical education classes).
7. Elementary students:
  - a. May not wear flip flops to school,
  - b. Must wear shoes closed in the back or have a back strap on footwear such as sandals or clog-style shoes.

## G. Jewelry, Piercings, Perfumes and Accessories

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The following criteria are used to identify criteria for acceptable jewelry piercings, perfumes and accessories that can be worn in schools:

1. Be modest without attracting undue attention to the wearer,
  2. Be unobtrusive so as not to endanger others' ability to be comfortable and healthy,
  3. Not have an overwhelming fragrance so as to infringe on others' comfort and health,
  4. Have no parts that may be perceived as a weapon (i.e. spikes),
  5. Have no chains, large belt buckles or adornments that could cause, or be perceived to cause, injury or damage,
  6. Include only those scarves which are intended for indoor use.
- H. Restrictions on Appearance, Language on Clothing, Symbols, Tattoos and Messages
- These must not show, reference or infer:
1. Profanity,
  2. Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, firearms or weapons,
  3. Violence or abuse,
  4. Suggestive and/or sexual messages,
  5. Language, brand logos or symbols as or on attire that offend, demean or promote hatred toward an identifiable person or group based on a person's race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation or disability,
  6. Words, symbols or placement of writing on clothing deemed inappropriate for the school setting such as rude, disrespectful or discourteous expressions that would have an effect on the learning environment,
  7. Anything deemed gang related.

## V. Consequences for Violation of this Dress Code Procedure

- A. First Offense
1. Student conference with administrator to discuss the violation(s) and review the dress code procedure
  2. Parent contact by the administrator to discuss the violation of the procedure and subsequent consequences should more violations occur
  3. Change of clothing by student to rectify violation (provided by the student or parent)
- B. Second and Subsequent Offenses
1. Student conference with administrator to discuss the violation(s) and review the dress code procedure
  2. Parent contact by the administrator to discuss the violation of the procedure and subsequent consequences should more violations occur
  3. Change of clothing by student to rectify violation (provided by the student or parent)
  4. Student discipline disposition involving non-exclusionary discipline actions at the discretion of the administrator

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