

**Bessemer City Board of Education  
Pre-K and Elementary  
Dress Code**

**Purpose and Intent**

A standardized dress code for Bessemer City Schools has been adopted to ensure that all students are provided safe and appropriate educational opportunities which are free from unnecessary disruptions or outside influences and to instill in students the need to dress appropriately and have respect for each other and authority. For young people, especially teenagers who are beginning to find their true identities in the middle of peer-pressure and parent prodding, dress is an important issue. For the younger children, lifetime habits of taste and dress are greatly affected by their childhood dressing patterns. This dress code will be strictly enforced in Bessemer City Schools, middle through high schools.

We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the following explanation behind the choice of the standards. The way a person dresses reflects the way he/she thinks. We want to prepare students for the world of work, and we believe a neat professional appearance is a good habit to develop in the childhood years. Just as students would dress one way for a picnic or ball game, there is an appropriate way to dress for school. A well-groomed student should come to school with an attitude that prepares him or her for neat, conscientious work. His or her attire should give him or her respect for self, fellow students, and teachers. Students who have questionable or inappropriate dress will not be allowed to attend class. The following items will serve as a minimum guide to acceptable dress for the Bessemer City School students.

The Board's dress code guidelines are intended to promote and foster an appropriate educational environment by minimizing unnecessary distractions and permitting students to focus on academic progress. The following mandatory guidelines are designed to further that intent:

Any student who fails to dress appropriately will not be allowed to attend class until proper clothing can be secured. If necessary, parents will be called to bring proper clothes to school. The student will be responsible for all class work missed. Nonconformity to the dress code is a Class I offense.

### **Dress Code Guidelines**

- A. No hats, caps, hair curlers/rollers, picks, visors, bandanas, head scarves, or sun glasses will be worn in school. Items may not be worn in the building or on school grounds and must be placed in bookbags or in a designated area and remain there during the school day, except those worn for religious purposes.
- B. Hair must be clean and well groomed. Male students with facial hair must keep it neat and well groomed. No hairstyle, hair color, body piercing, clothing, decorative dental appliances (whether permanent or temporary), or other article which is disruptive to the learning environment or which identifies a student as being a member of a gang or any subversive or unlawful organization will be allowed.
- C. Earrings may be worn. Except for the piercing of the earlobes and wearing of earrings that do not distract or draw unnecessary attention, the wearing of other body jewelry is not allowed, including but not limited to piercing of the tongue, nose, or eyebrow. Band-Aids may not be worn to conceal unauthorized jewelry. If it is determined by a school principal or designee that allowable earrings or jewelry worn by a student may become a safety hazard in an activity such as physical education, science laboratory, athletics, etc., the student shall remove such ornamentation.
- D. Students are to wear clothing in the manner for which it is designed. No clothing shall be worn inside out; suspenders shall be fastened and belts buckled. Pants must be worn at the waist. No excessively tight or revealing clothing such as see-through clothing may be worn. School administration may require that shirts and blouses be tucked in and coats be removed upon entering a school building. Sagging or ill-fitted pants are not allowed.
- E. Sun dresses may be worn with a jacket or appropriate covering. (Jacket or covering may not be sheer or mesh).
- F. Cutoff tops, tank tops, and mesh tops can be worn if a shirt with sleeves is worn underneath or another shirt is worn over the top. (Cover shirt or undershirt may not be sheer or mesh).
- G. Halter tops, tube tops, and midriff tops are not allowed. Midriffs and sides must be covered, which includes the complete mid-section, including the abdomen.

- H. Students are prohibited from wearing any metal chains, metal spiked apparel, or accessories, including but not limited to bracelets, belts, and other clothing and accessories with spikes, studs, or chains.
- I. No obscene language and/or illegal substances advertisements (to include alcoholic, marijuana and tobacco advertisements) may be displayed on clothing or accessories.
- J. Students are prohibited from wearing any sign, symbol, logo, or garment, which has been associated with any gang, cult, or unauthorized club or illegal organizational activity.
- K. Insignias, buttons, and clothing which are suggestive of vulgarities, violence or are drug-related and demeaning to others are banned and may not be worn during school hours, school activities and on school campus.
- L. Student's clothing should be neat and clean and not in noticeable disrepair. Pants, shorts and skirts must be worn at the waist and fit properly. Unhemmed (cut-off) shorts, skirts, shirts, pants, and garments with holes and slits cut in them are not allowed. Pants with open holes above the knee and "shredded" jeans will not be allowed.
- M. Sweat pants and jogging pants are allowed as long as they are properly fitted. Clothing must be worn over leggings, jeggings or tights and must be of appropriate length (generally no higher than mid-thigh), as determined by the principal or designee.
- N. Articles of clothing must be appropriate for school wear. Skirts, dresses, and shorts may be no shorter than four inches above the top of the knee. Slits in skirts must meet the four inches above the knee regulation. Female students must wear shorts or skirts under their skirts/dresses.
- O. Pajamas may not be worn to school.
- P. Students are required to wear appropriate shoes at all times. Shoes with wheels or lights are not appropriate for the school environment. Tennis shoes will be required for physical education class. No flip-flops, slides or slippers (house shoes) are allowed. Shoes with heels are inappropriate for elementary school students.
- Q. Undergarments must be worn and not be visible.

- R. Book bags/back packs and athletic bags must be placed in a designated area and remain there during the school day. Backpacks/book bags must be clear, transparent or mesh for safety reasons and not have wheels, unless written approval is given by a physician due to medical reasons.
  
- S. Jackets, coats and sweaters may be worn. Generally, these are inappropriate to be worn in the classroom.

Principals shall have the discretion to determine the appropriate dress for special school-related events.

### **Enforcement of Dress Code**

Parents, teachers, and principals will strictly enforce the dress code. A student may be sent home to make any necessary adjustments. Since this normally works a greater hardship on the parents and guardians than the students, parents are urged to supervise their child's dress on a daily basis and to take an active role in supporting this dress code.

Source: Bessemer City Board of Education, Bessemer, AL  
Alabaster City Board of Education, Alabaster, AL  
Jefferson County Board of Education, Birmingham, AL

Legal Reference: Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District  
( No. 21,) 393 U.S. 503. (1969)

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