

CASWELL COUNTY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY	<u>STUDENTS</u> Student Dress and Appearance	480
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The Caswell County Board of Education respects a student’s right to choose his or her style of dress or appearance. However, students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirement of a good school environment. If a student’s dress or lack of cleanliness is such that it constitutes a threat to health or safety, the principal or principal’s designee may require the student and student’s parent or guardian to take appropriate action to remedy the situation. In addition, if a student’s dress or appearance is so unusual, inappropriate or lacking in cleanliness that it clearly disrupts class or learning activities, the student may be required to change his or her dress or appearance.

Violations of this policy shall be handled by the principal or principal’s designee. The first violation of this policy shall result in a phone call or a conference with the student’s parents/guardians. The second violation shall be in-school punishment as determined by the principal or principal’s designee. A third violation of this policy during the school year shall result in a short-term suspension from the Caswell County School District for up to three (3) days. A fourth violation of this policy during the school year shall result in a short-term suspension from the Caswell County School District for up to 10 days of the school year. A subsequent violation may result in long-term suspension. The principal, in lieu of long-term suspension, may assign the student to a Board of Education approved alternative program.

Principals will maintain guidelines to assist students in determining appropriate dress and appearance for school, copies of which will be made available to parent and students in the school’s student handbook. Items listed below shall be included in all school guidelines and shall apply to all students. Reasonable accommodation will be made by the school principal or principal’s designee for those students who, because of age, a sincerely held religious belief, cultural heritage, or medical reason request a waiver of a particular guideline for dress or appearance. Exceptions may be granted by the principal for students involved in special duties, activities, or projects approved by the school. This would include but not be limited to: athletics, vocational classes and projects, special events, or other activities that would allow for non-conforming dress on a school campus.

Individual school dress codes may be more restrictive with Board approval and will be in the school’s student handbook. If changes occur during the school year, they must be approved by the Board of Education and appropriate time given to implement the changes.

- Clothing must be age appropriate, not disruptive to the teaching-learning process, and cannot be provocative, revealing, indecent, vulgar, or obscene. This will be

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determined by the principal or principal's designee.

- Hats, sweatbands, bandannas, or sunglasses will not be worn inside the schools buildings
- There shall be no jewelry affixed to a student's body which poses a health risk, safety risk or is disruptive to the learning environment of the school. The principal or principal's designee will determine.
- Abnormal hair color will not be allowed (i.e., sprayed or dyed blue, green, orange, etc.) which poses a health risk, safety risk or is disruptive to the learning environment of the school. The principal or principal's designee will determine.
- Clothing must be worn appropriately (nothing inside-out, backwards, unfastened bib overalls, belts must be buckled and worn at the waist line, etc.) Shirrtails (including jerseys) must be tucked in if they are longer than **the length of the fingertips of the student.**
- Clothing will not be allowed which promotes alcoholic beverages, tobacco, the use of controlled substances, depicts or promotes violence, or is of a disruptive nature.
- Clothing will not be allowed that is intentionally shredded or torn.
- Tight clothing such as knit or spandex bicycle/biker pants or overly tight pants are not allowed. This will be determined by the principal or his designee.
- Clothing is not to be sheer or mesh and cannot have excessive holes.
- Proper footwear is required. Shoes that have laces must be laced, tied and fit. Rubber or vinyl (shower shoes) flip flops are not to be worn at school during regular hours of instruction.
- Undergarments are not to be visible.
- The hem of skirts/shorts and dresses must be no higher than 3 inches above the top of the kneecap. Wearing tights, spandex, or leggings does not exempt students from this rule.
- No sagging pants are allowed. Pants are to be worn at waist.

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- Shirts and blouses may not be tank top or have spaghetti straps, one strap or no straps. Shirts and blouses must cover the waist, no exposed midriff. Discretion should be used by the principal for very young students.
- Those clothing articles, accessories which are identified as being related to a group or gang which provoke others to act violently or be intimidated by fear of violence or are potentially dangerous shall not be worn on the campus or at any school activity.

Request for Reasonable Accommodation for Sincerely Held Religious Belief

The principal or principal's designee may, as a reasonable accommodation under the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy, exempt a student from the requirements of the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy when compliance with those requirements would impose a substantial burden on the exercise of a sincerely held religious belief.

In making determinations regarding exemptions to the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy, the principal or the principal's designee shall not attempt to determine whether the religious beliefs are valid but only whether they are central to religious doctrine and sincerely held. To assist in deciding whether an exemption is warranted, the principal or principal's designee may request the parent to provide information in writing demonstrating (1) that the objection to the requirements of the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy is grounded in religious tenets rather than mere personal preference; (2) that the religious beliefs are sincerely held and practiced; and (3) that compliance with the requirements of the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy truly will interfere with the exercise of those beliefs.

Generally, the following kinds of information may be required by the principal or principal's designee in making the determination: (a) a written statement by an authority on the religion explaining the religious belief and how it is affected by the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy; (b) a copy of, or citation to, a recognized religious text which is the basis of that belief; (c) identification of the religious group holding the belief, if there is such a group; (d) any written descriptions or summaries that might be available, from texts or encyclopedias or religious publications, explaining the religious belief and how its exercise would be affected by compliance with a Student Dress Code and Appearance policy; and (e) examples of other circumstances in which the sincerity of the religious belief has been demonstrated. The principal or principal's designee may request any or all of this information to assist in any exemption assessment.

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If needed to make a fair determination under this section, the principal or principal's designee or the superintendent and board may consult with experts on religion outside the school system. If that is done, the principal or principal's designee will notify the parent of the identity of the person consulted and what that person said.

Request for Reasonable Accommodation for Cultural Heritage dress.

The principal or principal's designee may, as a reasonable accommodation under the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy, exempt a student from the requirements of the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy when compliance with those requirements would render impossible the student's ability to express his or her cultural heritage.

To assist in deciding whether an exemption is warranted, the principal or principal's designee may request the parent to provide information in writing demonstrating (1) that the objection to the requirement of the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy is grounded in well-established dictates of the student's regularly-practiced cultural tradition rather than mere personal preference; (2) that the cultural heritage dress is regularly and consistently practiced by the student outside school; and (3) that compliance with the requirements of the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy truly will interfere with the student's ability to express his or her cultural heritage.

Generally, the following kinds of information may be required by the principal or principal's designee in making the determination: (a) a written statement explaining the history, origin, and meaning of the cultural heritage dress and how it is affected by compliance with the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy; (b) a copy of, or citation to, a recognized text documenting the meaning and origin of the cultural heritage dress; (c) documentation that the student is part of the culture that wears the dress he or she wishes to wear; and (d) examples of other circumstances in which the student's consistent practice of wearing the cultural heritage dress at issue has been demonstrated. The principal or principal's designee may request any or all of this information to assist in any exemption assessment.

If needed to make a fair determination under this section, the principal or principal's designee or the superintendent and board may consult with experts outside the school system on the particular cultural heritage. If that is done, the principal or principal's designee will notify the parent of the identify of the person consulted and what that person said.

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Request for Reasonable Accommodation for a Medical Reason

The principal or principal’s designee may, as a reasonable accommodation under the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy, exempt a student from the requirements of the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy when compliance with those requirements would expose the effects of a student’s medical treatments or when medical necessity prevents a student’s compliance with the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy.

In making determinations regarding medical exemptions to the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy, the principal or principal’s designee may request the parent to provide information in writing demonstrating that the medical basis for the requested exemption is true and accurate.

Generally, the following kinds of information may be required by the principal or principal’s designee in making the determination: (a) a written statement from the student’s medical doctor explaining the student’s medical need and why it requires an exemption from the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy; or (b) a written statement from the student’s medical doctor explaining the effects of medical treatment on the student and how such effects will be exposed or made more prominent by compliance with the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy.

If needed to make a fair determination under this section, the principal or principal’s designee or the superintendent and board may consult with medical experts outside the school system. If that is done, the principal or principal’s designee will notify the parent of the identity of the person consulted and what that person said.

In All the Above Situations.

Even in cases where exemptions are granted, if the application of this exemption results in substantial disruption in the school or if the application of this exemption adversely affects the health and safety of the students in the school and the school cannot eliminate the disruption or cure the health or safety issues in another manner, the principal reserves the right to deny exemption and enforce the requirements of the Student Dress Code and Appearance policy.