

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The Board recognizes that students are entitled to free speech under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which may extend to choice of attire and grooming as matters of expression. However, this constitutional right is only protected if a student's personal appearance does not disrupt the educational process, infringe on the rights of others, endanger the health or safety of others or oneself, or violate federal, state, or local laws.

Due to the potential for disruption or expressions of vulgarity, the following types of clothing shall not be permitted:

- \* Displays of obscene, lewd or vulgar comments or designs;
- \* Messages directed toward or intended to harass, threaten, intimidate, or demean an individual or group;
- \* Advertisement of alcohol, tobacco products or illegal drugs;
- \* Insignia used as a means of gang identity;
- \* Any word, message, or design that could reasonably be interpreted to have a sexual connotation.

Enforcement of this dress code serves a valid educational purpose to instill discipline and create a positive, orderly educational environment.

Staff members who feel that a student's clothing is unacceptable according to the above standards shall refer the matter to the principal or his/her designee. The principal shall exercise reasonable judgment when determining infractions.

A teacher, sponsor, or coach responsible for a school group making public appearances may insist on a stricter adherence to the dress code regulations with the principal's approval. Students and parents must be made aware of the dress code regulations.

All students and parents shall be made aware of the dress code through the student handbook. Additionally, principals may also send home written notification of the school's policy regarding student dress code.

REFERENCE: State Board Policy 4373: Expected Behavior in Safe and Supportive Schools; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; School Law Issues in West Virginia, National Business Institute, Inc. 101U1214, 1996

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