

STUDENT APPEARANCE & DRESS CODE POLICY

Students are required to wear appropriate clothing according to the situation and the grade level involved. Inappropriate clothing and appearance are disruptive to the school program and principals will enforce adherence to this policy by those under their jurisdiction. Each school may provide for more specific dress code requirements within the scope of this district-wide dress code and shall provide each student with a copy of their school's dress code. **School administrators have final authority to decide if clothing complies with District rules.**

When it is determined that a student's clothing does not comply with the dress code, a parent/guardian may be asked to bring an appropriate change of clothes to school. The student may, with parental permission, be sent home in order to change clothes. In addition, the student may also receive a disciplinary consequence for violating the school's dress code policy.

Violations of this Policy

Violations of this policy shall be treated as disruptive behavior in violation of the Student Code of Conduct. However, policy violations shall not carry over on the student's discipline record to subsequent years. This policy shall apply to students at all times when they attend school or any school sponsored event. The principal may exercise discretion and permit exceptions to this policy for extracurricular activities.

This policy shall be applicable in its entirety, except where a specific section may be directed toward a select group of students. All persons subject to this policy shall comply with all sections of it.

- Wearing apparel, which tends to identify association with secret societies as prohibited by Florida Statutes, shall not be worn.
- Cleanliness of the physical person consistent with the maintenance of good health and to avoid offensiveness to others is mandatory.
- Some programs may require uniforms. Continued enrollment in these programs shall be contingent on the student adhering to all uniform requirements and standards.

General Dress Code Policy Requirements

1. **Appropriate Sizes:** Students shall wear clothing of appropriate size as determined by the principal or designee exercising his or her judgment. The size of shirts and pants shall be appropriate to the student's body size and shall not be unduly oversized or undersized.
2. **Shirts:** Shirts shall be tucked into the waistband of the pants or skirt. Exceptions will be allowed in individual cases based upon the discretion of the principal or designee.
3. **Pants:** Pants with belt loops shall be worn with a belt that is properly fastened. Pants shall be worn so that the waistband is worn at the waist and not below the waist.

4. **Skirts and Dresses:** The hem of girls' skirts or dresses shall be no shorter than mid-thigh as determined by the principal or designee in the exercise of his or her judgment.
5. **Shoes/Footwear:** All students shall wear shoes/footwear. Elementary and Middle School shoes/footwear shall be closed toe and heel athletic shoes so as to protect the entire foot. High School students may wear sandals provided they don't interfere with the safety and welfare of the student. Platforms and shoes with wheels may not be worn.

Unacceptable Attire

Students are not allowed to wear clothing, jewelry (including body piercing jewelry and "grills"), buttons, haircuts, tattoos, or other attire or markings which are offensive, suggestive, disruptive, or indecent such as:

1. Clothing associated with gangs,
2. Clothing encouraging the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or violence,
3. Clothing associated with discrimination on the basis of age, color, handicap, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion, or sex.
4. Clothing exposing the torso or upper thighs such as see-through garments, mini-skirts or mini-dresses, halters, backless dresses, tube tops or tank tops without over shirts, spaghetti strap garments without over shirts, bare midriff outfits, or shirts tied at the midriff.
5. Clothing not properly fastened or with tears.
6. Clothing or outer garments traditionally designed as undergarments such as boxer shorts, bloomers, tights, hosiery, sleepwear.
7. Clothing or footwear that is construed by the principal or designee as hazardous or dangerous to the health of the student or others.
8. Hats, headgear, or any head covering, except when approved by the Principal.

Shorts

Students may wear hemmed walking shorts or Bermuda shorts, only if the wearing of shorts has not been revoked and they are appropriate for safety or employment training purposes, as evidenced hereinafter. In all situations in which shorts are permissible to be worn, the shorts shall extend to the tip of the fingertips when both arms are extended by the side. The Principal's determination as to the appropriate length of the shorts shall be determinative and final.

Unacceptable Shorts

Athletic shorts including spandex-style "bicycle" shorts, cut-off jeans, frayed jeans or pants, cut-off sweat pants, short-shorts, running shorts, and see-through boxer-type shorts are not permitted.

Revocation of Shorts Privilege for Excessive Violations

If an individual school's School Advisory Council (SAC) determines that too many students have abused the shorts policy, the Principal may revoke the shorts privilege at that particular school so that the entire student body will not be allowed to wear shorts to school during the next semester. In such cases, the Principal may elect to prohibit wearing shorts to school at that particular school during subsequent semesters or school years or reinstate the privilege of wearing shorts to school as the Principal, in consultation with the SAC, may deem appropriate. Additionally, the Principal may revoke the shorts privilege of a student who violates the provisions of the shorts policy twice in one semester.

School Board Adoption of Dress Code Policy

Subject to the terms and conditions set forth below the School Board has adopted this Policy providing for a uniform dress code pertaining to all students in grades kindergarten through twelve as follows:

Findings

Section 1001.43, Florida Statutes, stipulates additional powers that authorize the School Board to adopt policies to ensure the safety and welfare of the student body and school personnel. The School Board may require uniforms to be worn by the student body or impose other dress-related requirements if the School Board finds that these requirements are necessary for the safety and welfare of the student body.

Purpose and Intent

In adopting this Policy, it is the School Board's purpose and intent to enable all of the public elementary, middle, and high schools in Osceola County to experience a safer learning environment on all of our school campuses.

Scope

This Policy shall apply to all students enrolled in any public school under the jurisdiction of the School Board of Osceola County, Florida.

Charter/Magnet Schools

In the event that a Charter or Magnet school has a more stringent student dress code policy, such policy shall take precedence over the Dress Code Policy described herein.

School Uniform Dress Code

At each school to which this standardized dress code applies, the principal shall confer with the school's SAC to develop and publish a school dress code that will contain the following basic uniform requirements as to the styles and colors of clothing.

- a. **Girls' Basic Standardized Clothing:** The basic uniform clothing for girls in **kindergarten through grade twelve** shall consist of a long or short-sleeved navy blue or white collared shirt, such as a polo, oxford, or dress shirt, with a navy blue or khaki (tan) skirt, walking shorts, slacks, skorts, jumper, or similar clothing. The skirt, shorts, slacks, skorts, and jumpers may be of denim, corduroy, or twill fabric. A small logo is acceptable.
- b. **Boys' Basic Standardized Clothing:** The basic uniform clothing for boys in **kindergarten through grade twelve** shall consist of a long or short-sleeved navy blue or white collared shirt, such as a polo, oxford, or dress shirt, and a navy blue or khaki (tan) pair of long pants, or walking shorts. The pants or shorts may be of denim, corduroy, or twill fabric. A small logo is acceptable.
- c. **Additional Uniform Alternatives:** In addition to the basic uniform clothing specified in paragraphs a. and b. above, at the discretion of the principal, a school may include in the school's uniform dress code the following alternatives:
 - 1) One or two additional specified school colors may be allowed for the collared shirt. Colored trim, stripes, or decorations will not be allowed. A small logo is acceptable.
 - 2) Skirts, shorts, slacks, skorts, and jumpers must be a solid color (traditional blue jean colors are acceptable) with no stripes, decorations, or embroidery. A small logo is acceptable.
 - 3) Vocational-Technical Centers: For safety and employment training purposes, students enrolled at the vocational-technical centers will wear the uniform of the program. If there is no uniform, this rule shall apply.
- d. **Considerations:** In selecting such alternatives, if any, the principal and SAC shall take into consideration the availability, affordability, and practicality of the alternative.
- e. **School T-Shirts:** In addition to the shirts described in subparagraphs a., b., and c. above, each school may include in its uniform dress code the option of allowing students to wear a school-sponsored T-shirt (which may have a crew neck rather than a collar) only on school days or during school events designated by the principal.
- f. **Outer Garments:** The Dress Code Policy shall not prohibit students from wearing coats, jackets, sweaters, or other appropriate outer garments when necessary due to weather conditions or for other legitimate reasons and shall be the appropriate size for the student, shall not be overly baggy, nor violate any other provision of this Policy. Long overcoats, sweatshirts, or sweaters that might serve to conceal contraband shall be removed immediately upon arrival at the school or function.

- g. **District-wide Dress Code:** All other aspects of student dress and appearance not covered by this uniform dress code policy shall be governed by the remaining provisions of this section and any related school rules pertaining to student appearance.

Financial Considerations:

- a. No student shall be denied attendance at school or be otherwise penalized for failing to wear clothing that complies with the uniform dress code if such failure is due to financial hardship.
- b. Each school's principal and SAC shall develop procedures and criteria to offer to assist students who would have or are having difficulty complying with their school's uniform dress code due to financial hardships and shall develop a program to provide for donations of clothing or financial assistance, consignment shops, or reuse of uniform clothing or similar program that would alleviate such financial hardships.

New Students: Students entering the Osceola County Public School System for the first time during the school year shall be granted a grace period up to thirty (30) days before being required to comply with the uniform dress code.

Alternative Education Programs: Students enrolled in an Alternative Education Program shall be required to dress in accordance with the Dress Code policy in effect at the Alternative Education Program, and in absence of such a policy, then those students shall comply with this Policy.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the uniform dress code shall be permitted when:

- a. A student wears a uniform of a nationally recognized youth organization, such as the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, on regular meeting days.
- b. A student wears a button, armband, or other accouterment to exercise the right of free speech guaranteed by the United States and Florida Constitutions, unless the button, armband, or other accouterment signifies or is related to gangs, gang membership, or gang activity, or would otherwise violate the dress code policy.
- c. A student wears a costume or special clothing necessary for a school play or other school-sponsored activity as permitted by the principal.
- d. The wearing of clothing in compliance with the uniform dress code violates a student's sincerely held religious belief, then such students and the student's parent shall submit a signed affidavit setting forth the religious issue and the requested exemption to the Dress Code Policy.
- e. A student's parent requests a reasonable accommodation to address the student's disability. Such request shall be reduced to writing and submitted to the principal for approval.

Violation of the Policy of Unacceptable Appearance (Not Necessarily Clothing)

It will be a violation of this Policy for a student to attend school or any school-sponsored event or function held during the school day with any visible body piercing, except for earrings on the ears, all other body piercing jewelry/ items must be removed and not concealed. It will also be a violation of this Policy for any student to have his or her hair cut or worn in such a manner, or colored in such a manner, in an extreme fashion such that the Principal, within reasonable exercise of his or her discretion, determines it is so distracting or disruptive that it interferes with the orderly educational process.

By way of illustration only, and not by way of limitation, examples of unacceptable hair color or style would be extremely garish neon colors, orange, purple, green (or other unnatural colors), color patterns such as plaid or stripes, Mohawk style, extreme spiked hair and similarly unusual and distracting hairstyles.

Further, it will be a violation of this Policy for a student to wear makeup that is not within the acceptable standards for the school or community such that the Principal, within the reasonable exercise of his or her discretion, determines it is so distracting or disruptive that it interferes with the orderly educational process.

Breach of Conduct

Repeated violations of the Dress Code Policy shall be treated as disruptive behavior under the Code of Student Conduct.