

**DRESS AND GROOMING**

This Administrative Regulation serves as the District-wide dress code, which replaces and supersedes any school site dress code. This ensures consistency in enforcement and fidelity to the District's intent. Student dress codes must support equitable educational access and not reinforce gender stereotypes. Enforcement should not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, household income, gender identity or cultural observance.

All students should be able to dress comfortably for school without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming, and all students and staff should understand that they are responsible for managing their own personal "distractions" without regulating individual students' clothing/self-expression. This regulation ensures that teachers can focus on teaching without the additional and often uncomfortable burden of dress code enforcement. Students also should not face unnecessary barriers to school attendance, and conflict and inconsistent discipline should be minimized whenever possible.

**GOALS OF A STUDENT DRESS CODE**

A student dress code should accomplish several goals:

- Maintain a safe learning environment in classes where protective or supportive clothing is needed, such as chemistry/biology (eye or body protection), dance (bare feet, tights/leotards), or PE (athletic attire/shoes)
- Allow students to wear clothing of their choice that is comfortable
- Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination
- Prevent students from wearing clothing with offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, and pornography
- Prevent students from wearing clothing with images or language depicting or advocating violence or the use of alcohol or drugs
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of gender/gender identification, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, body type/size, religion, and personal style

**RECOMMENDED DRESS CODE POLICY**

The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parents or guardians. The school district and individual schools are responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student.

Students should be given the most choice possible in how they dress for school. Any restrictions must be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and must be explained within the dress code.

**DRESS AND GROOMING (continued)**

1. Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all students

Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, and nipples are covered with non-see through material. Cleavage should not have coverage requirements. All items listed in the “must wear” and “may wear” categories below must meet this basic principle.

2. Students Must Wear:\*

- Shirt: for example, tank top, sweater/dress
- Bottom: for example, pants/sweatpants/shorts/skirt/dress/leggings
- Shoes: activity-specific shoe requirements are permitted (for example for sports/PE, industrial arts classes, and science labs)
- Items and apparel in accordance with state and local health mandates (such as facemasks, shields, etc.)

\* Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, and job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress, but should not focus on covering girls’ bodies or promoting culturally specific attire.

3. Students May Wear:

- Hats, including religious headwear and durags
- Hoodie sweatshirts (over the head is allowed)
- Fitted pants, including leggings, yoga pants, and “skinny jeans”
- Midriff-baring shirts
- Pajamas
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear is not exposed
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps, halter tops, and “tube” (strapless) tops
- Athletic attire
- Clothing with commercial or athletic logos provided they do not violate Section 2 above

4. Students Cannot Wear:

Unacceptable clothing and apparel includes any clothing, accessory or apparel that explicitly or implicitly displays or promotes the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, weapons, racial or ethnic slurs, is demeaning to others, contains gang affiliation or identity, violence, is sexually suggestive, contains derogatory or profane material or hate speech, or disrupts the learning environment (VUSD board policy).

- Any item not designed to be worn as apparel (i.e. flags, blankets, towels).
- Visible underwear; however, visible waistbands or straps on undergarments worn under other clothing are not a violation.
- Headgear that obscures the face (except as a religious observance).

## **DRESS AND GROOMING (continued)**

### **TRAINING FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS**

A school dress code is most effective when school administrators and teachers are trained to understand and embrace the intent of the code, how to apply and enforce the code equitably, and how to talk about the dress code and the reasoning behind it.

- School administrators and teachers should be trained to understand the purpose/spirit of the code, and how to enforce it with the least impact on student learning and self-confidence
- School administrators and teachers must enforce the District dress code consistently, and school administration and staff do not have discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement
- School staff should be trained to use positive language to explain the code and to address code violations

### **DRESS CODE ENFORCEMENT AT SCHOOLS**

A school dress code is only as effective and fair as its enforcement.

- Enforcement should be consistent with a school's overall discipline plan; failure to comply with the student dress code should be enforced consistently with comparable behavior and conduct violations, including access to a student advocate and appeals process
- Enforcement should follow District progressive discipline policies and practices
- Enforcement for students in grades TK-5 should be limited to safety and non-violence/non-discrimination and should not include messages predicated on body maturity or "professionalism"
- Violations should be treated as minor on the continuum of school rule violations
- Best efforts should be made to not remove students from a classroom/lose class time solely because of a dress code violation. Best efforts will be made to minimize loss of learning time due to dress code violations.
- Students should never be forced to wear something with the intent to humiliate them as a response to the dress code violation. Students can be asked to put on their own on-site clothing, if available, in order to be dressed more to code or be given the option to have a garment that meets the code brought to them.
- No student should be disproportionately affected by dress code enforcement because of gender, race, body size, or body maturity.
- The dress code should be clearly conveyed to students, not just in the student handbook, but also in other ways, such as posters, newsletters, etc.
- Students should not be shamed or required to display their body in front of others (students, parents, or staff) in school. "Shaming" includes, but is not limited to, kneeling or bending over to check attire fit, or measuring straps or length of bottoms. Dress code corrections should always be made privately, not in front of other students.