

The board believes that the appearance and the conduct of its employees are of supreme importance in establishing a positive climate for learning and for presenting a good example for students. Therefore, the board affirms its expectations that all personnel shall be cleanly, neatly, and appropriately attired for the work to be done. An employee's dress and appearance must not disrupt or distract from the educational process and must be in accordance with health and safety standards. The superintendent shall develop and communicate to employees the guidelines for appropriate dress and appearance. Such guidelines (1) must be gender-neutral; (2) may authorize the principal or department supervisors to develop specific dress or additional appearance requirements for each school or department; (3) may authorize exemptions from the guidelines for employees performing specialized duties that require a different form of dress; and (4) must provide a process for offering reasonable accommodations when required by law.

Administrative and supervisory personnel shall set a good example in personal appearance and good manners and shall encourage and expect employees to dress in accordance with the board's expectations. An employee's supervisor will make an initial determination of whether an employee's dress or appearance is inappropriate. In making this determination, the supervisor will consider the following factors:

1. the nature and environment of the work;
2. whether the dress is consistent with a professional environment;
3. health and safety factors;
4. the nature of the employee's public contact and the normal expectations for outside parties with whom the employee will work;
5. the employee's interaction with students;
6. the prevailing practices of other workers in similar jobs; and
7. any properly established guidelines for dress or appearance.

Based on these factors, the following requirements are established for all employees:

1. Employees shall be clean, neat, and appropriately attired. An employee's dress and appearance shall not disrupt the educational process or distract from a positive school climate.

2. The dress and appearance of employees should be appropriate to the type of work performed, with reasonable accommodation when the nature of an employee's work is unique.
3. Reasonable accommodations will be considered in accordance with all federal, state and local regulations.
4. Uniform dress may be required for certain categories of employees such as: food service and maintenance personnel.

The following are considered inappropriate for employees:

- a. Clothing that is inappropriately revealing, regardless of the activity or movement of the employee;
- b. Shirts with spaghetti straps, low-cut tops, or shorts or skirts that are shorter than mid-thigh in length;
- c. Flip-flops;
- d. Sweatpants;
- e. Clothing, jewelry, or body art which displays inappropriate images, ~~or~~ words, or is obscene;
- f. Clothing which reveals undergarments;
- g. Clothing which is tattered or ragged; or
- h. Hats worn inside the building.

An employee's immediate supervisor shall make an initial determination of whether an employee's dress or appearance is a violation of this policy. If the supervisor determines that the employee's dress or appearance is inappropriate, detrimental to the work or learning environment, or hazardous to the health and safety of the employee or students, the supervisor shall counsel the employee regarding appropriate attire that is consistent with this policy and shall determine whether the employee is allowed to remain at work or must leave work to change his/her dress. Any failure to follow the supervisor's directive and/or blatant violation or repeated violations of this policy may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.; Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, P.L. 117-328, div. II - Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; *Bostock v. Clayton County*, 590 U.S., 140 S. Ct. 1731 (2020); G. S. 115 – C (36), (47)

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Administrative Procedure: None

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