

AR Code: 7340-R Employee Dress and Appearance

All employees of the school system serve as role models for the students and as leaders in the community. Consistent with these roles, all employees' dress and appearance should meet the requirements of their job, project a positive image to students and the public, and be consistent with health and safety requirements.

The manner in which employees dress and appear is part of the school system's atmosphere and should enhance rather than distract from a safe and orderly environment for learning. Dress and appearance must be consistent with prevailing or accepted standards for various jobs as well as reflect the board's expectations expressed in board policy 7340, that all personnel be professionally, neatly, and appropriately attired for the work to be done at school.

To further communicate the board's expectations, the following specific guidelines are established for employee dress and appearance.

I. DRESS AND APPEARANCE STANDARDS

A. Uniforms

1. Uniforms will be the official attire for employees in the following departments.
 - a. Cafeteria
 - b. Maintenance
 - c. Transportation
2. Employees must wear appropriate attire consistent with this regulation on any days that a uniform is not required.

B. Appropriate Attire

1. Administrators and administrative support employees are to project a professional image and should dress and groom appropriately for an office/business environment.
2. Teachers and teacher support personnel are expected to project a professional image that sets positive dress and grooming examples for students.

3. Appropriate attire means:

All clothing should be neat, clean, and free from rips, tears, and excessive wrinkles. The following generally are considered appropriate attire:

- Any short or long-sleeved shirts with collars, including polo shirts
- Sweaters and mock turtlenecks
- Shirts should be tucked in unless designed to be worn out
- Blouses, knit shirts, turtlenecks
- Sleeveless garments worn under a jacket, overshirt, or sweater
- Any dress pant, including khakis and corduroys
- Skirts, dresses, skorts, professional dress shorts, or capris that are both modest in length and that enable the wearer to sit comfortably in public without exposing undergarments
- Closed-toe shoes
- Dress sandals in warm weather
- Athletic or slip-on shoes and/or tennis shoes approved due to orthopedic concerns, work assignment, special activity, or work duties on a particular day
- Physical Education instructors and coaches may wear shorts that are modest in length, athletic sweat suits, and athletic shoes on days they are teaching P.E. or engaged in athletic activities.
- Employees performing duties in lab or shop settings, or certain extracurricular activities may require work-type clothes, special footwear, aprons, or other protective items as approved by the principal or supervisor.

4. Appearance

While on duty, employees should appear neat, clean, and professional.

C. Inappropriate Attire

The following attire is inappropriate while an employee is on duty:

- Low-waist or low-cut pants that expose undergarments
- Skirts, dresses, skorts, professional dress shorts, or capris that are not modest in length or do not enable a wearer to sit comfortably in public without exposing undergarments
- Shorts that are cut-offs (jeans or others) or bike shorts
- Tight, form-fitting, and/or revealing attire

- Low-cut or mid-drift blouses or tops
- Sheer or see-through clothing
- Backless or strapless tops
- Spaghetti straps and tank tops, unless covered
- Clothing that is frayed, excessively faded, torn, or excessively wrinkled
- Spandex, yoga pants, leotards, leggings (tights or leggings may be worn if covered by a dress of modest length)
- Casual footwear such as “flip-flops” (rubber, sport, leather) for pool/beach wear
- Shower shoes (thong-like shoes that resemble dressy/decorative sandals without a heel strap are acceptable)
- T-shirts or sweatshirts of any kind unless previously approved by the principal for a designated special occasion or spirit day
- Fleece sweatpants or wind suits
- Dress or appearance that would be disruptive to the safe and orderly learning environment
- Attire that contains slogans or messages that (1) are vulgar, indecent or obscene; (2) advertise any product or service not permitted to minors by law; or (3) that are likely to disrupt the educational environment of the school.
- Jewelry affixed to an employee’s nose, mouth, tongue, lip, chin, cheek, or eyebrow

D. Field Trips

Principals will notify employees in advance of any field trip if appropriate attire for the field trip is different from the attire in the dress code.

E. Special Occasion Days

Employees may wear jeans in good repair (not faded, frayed, torn, or excessively wrinkled) and casual shirts, (this would include school t-shirts or sweatshirts) when approved by the principal or supervisor for designated special occasions.

F. Parent Teacher Conference Days

Employees are expected to follow the dress and appearance guidelines in this regulation on parent teacher conference days.

II. EXEMPTIONS TO DRESS AND APPEARANCE STANDARDS

- A.** Principals and supervisors may exempt employees from specific provisions of this dress code when the nature of the work demands clothing other than prescribed.
- B.** Principals and supervisors shall exempt employees from specific provisions of this dress code or make other reasonable accommodations when required by law.

An accommodation will not be considered reasonable if it would result in undue hardship to the school system's operations. Reasonable accommodation will be made:

1. when an employee's religious affiliation, creed, or any legitimate practice related thereto, requires a clothing or otherwise makes the employee unable to fully comply with the dress code;
 2. to accommodate an employee's physical disabilities or for other legitimate health reasons; or
 3. under other circumstances as may be required by law.
- C. Employees are encouraged to contact their principal or supervisor to request a reasonable accommodation when needed.

[Employers must accommodate an employee's disability or religious beliefs by modifying the dress code or permitting an exception unless doing so would result in undue hardship. The Supreme Court has held that the employer need not actually know there is a conflict between an employee's religious practice and a work rule to trigger the employee's obligation to accommodate. An employer may not make a religious practice, confirmed or otherwise, a factor in employment decisions. EEOC v. Abercrombie & Fitch Stores, Inc., 575 U.S. ____, 135 S. Ct. 2028 (2015). Therefore, an employer who knows or should know of a conflict or potential conflict between the employee's religious belief or practice and their job should consider whether an accommodation may be necessary. Consult your board attorney for more information.]

III. VIOLATIONS OF DRESS AND APPEARANCE STANDARDS

A. Initial Determination of Violation

The employee's principal or supervisor will make the initial determination that attire is inappropriate by applying the guidelines in this regulation and those set forth in board policy 7340, Employee Dress and Appearance. The principal or supervisor shall consider the following:

1. the guidelines for dress and appearance established in this regulation;
2. the nature of the work;
3. whether the dress is consistent with a professional environment;
4. health and safety factors;
5. the nature of the employee's public contact and the normal expectations of outside parties with whom the employee will work;

6. the employee's interaction with students; and
7. the prevailing practices of other workers in similar jobs.

B. Supervisor's Decision and Directive

If the employee's attire is determined to violate the standards established in board policy or this regulation, or to pose a health or safety hazard, the principal or supervisor will counsel the employee regarding appropriate attire and decide if the employee may remain at work or is to be sent off the job to change.

C. Appeal and Consequences

1. Employees may appeal the principal or supervisor's determination of a dress code violation in accordance with policy 1750/7220, Grievance Procedure for Employees.
2. Failure to follow the principal or supervisor's directive, or blatant or repeated violations of the dress and appearance standards established in this regulation will subject the employee to disciplinary action.

IV. ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL

- A.** Principals and supervisors shall endeavor to work with employees to address concerns regarding the content or implementation of these guidelines as necessary to meet the requirements of law.
- B.** Principals and supervisors shall communicate these requirements for dress and appearance to employees in the schools/departments they oversee.

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