

Students

Student Dress Code

The Board of Education believes that:

- All students should be able to dress comfortably for school without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- An individual students' clothing/self-expression should not be regulated based upon another student or staff member's personal perspective or discomfort.
- Staff can focus on their jobs without the additional and often uncomfortable burden of dress code enforcement.
- Students should not face unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
- Reasons for conflict and inconsistent discipline should be minimized whenever possible.

There are many purposes for policy governing student dress. The most important purposes include:

- 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 offensive 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.

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 and parents/guardians shall be informed about the dress code at the beginning of the school year and whenever these standards are revised. The dress code should be clearly communicated, *not just* in the student handbook, *but in other ways including, but not limited to*, annual instruction, posters, and newsletters.

A student who violates the dress code shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Gang-Related Apparel

The principal, staff and parents/guardians at a school may establish a reasonable dress code that prohibits students from wearing gang-related apparel when there is evidence of a gang presence that disrupts or threatens to disrupt the school's activities. Such a dress code may be included as part of the school safety plan and must be presented to the Board for approval. The Board shall approve the plan upon determining that it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the school's students.

At individual schools that have a dress code prohibiting gang-related apparel at school or school activities, the principal, staff and parents/guardians participating in the development of the school safety plan shall define "gang-related apparel" and shall limit this definition to apparel that reasonably could be determined to threaten the health and safety of the school environment if it were worn or displayed on a school campus. (Education Code [32282](#))

Because gang-related symbols are constantly changing, definitions of gang-related apparel shall be reviewed at least once each semester and updated whenever related information is received.

Uniforms

In order to promote student safety and discourage theft, peer rivalry and/or gang activity, a school may establish a reasonable dress code requiring students to wear uniforms. In schools where a schoolwide uniform is required, the principal, staff and parents/guardians of the individual school shall jointly select the specific uniform to be worn. (Education Code [35183](#)). Such a dress code may be included as part of the school safety plan and must be presented to the Board for approval. The Board shall approve the plan upon determining that it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the school's students.

If a school's plan to require uniforms is adopted, the Superintendent or designee shall establish procedures whereby parents/guardians may choose to have their children exempted from the school uniform policy. Students shall not be penalized academically, otherwise discriminated against or denied attendance to school if their parents/guardians so decide. (Education Code [35183](#))

At least six months before a school uniform policy is implemented, the principal or designee shall notify parents/guardians of this policy. (Education Code [35183](#)) This notice shall also inform parents/guardians of their right to have their child exempted.

The principal or designee shall also repeat this notification at the end of the school year so that parents/guardians are reminded before school clothes are likely to be purchased.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that resources are identified to assist economically disadvantaged students in obtaining uniforms including:

- Establishing criteria for determining eligibility for financial assistance when purchasing uniforms
- Establishing a method for recycling or exchanging uniforms as students grow out of them

Students who participate in a nationally recognized youth organization shall be allowed to wear organization uniforms on days when the organization has a scheduled meeting.

(Education Code 35183)

EDUCATION CODE

32281 School safety plans

35183 School dress codes; uniforms

35183.5 Sun-protective clothing

48907 Student exercise of free expression

49066 Grades; effect of physical education class apparel

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
302 Pupils to be neat and clean on entering school

Policy ALAMEDA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Adopted: August 25, 2009 Alameda, California
Revised:

Student Dress Code

Basic Principles:

- All students are encouraged to dress in a manner that is comfortable and conducive to an active school day.
- Students should be able to wear clothing without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- The student dress code should serve to support all students to develop a body-positive self-image.

All items listed in the “must wear” and “may wear” categories below must meet these basic principles.

Students MUST Wear:

- Top
- Bottom
- Shoes
- Clothing that covers specific body parts (genitals, buttocks, and areolae/nipples) with opaque material

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 students’ bodies or promoting culturally-specific attire. Activity specific shoe requirements are permitted (Examples include but are not limited to physical education and shop class)

Students MAY Choose to Wear:

- Hats, including religious headwear
- Hoodie sweatshirts (over head is allowed)
- Fitted pants, including leggings, yoga pants and “skinny jeans”
- Sweatpants, shorts, skirts, dresses, pants
- 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 the guidelines in the ‘CANNOT Wear’ section below
- Sun-protective clothing, including but not limited to hats, for outdoor use during the school day. (Education Code [35183.5](#))

Students CANNOT Wear:

- Violent language or images
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity) or the use of same
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography

- Images or language that create a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class
- Visible underwear or bathing suits of similar design - Visible waistbands or straps on undergarments worn under other clothing are not a violation
- Helmets, hoods, or other headgear that obscures the face (except as a religious observance)

No grade of a student participating in a physical education class shall be adversely affected if the student does not wear standardized physical education apparel because of circumstances beyond the student's control. (Education Code [49066](#))

Training and Enforcement:

- All staff should be trained to understand the purpose/spirit of the code, the actual code, and how to enforce with the least impact on student learning and self-confidence.
- All staff must enforce the district dress code consistently, once it is adopted. All staff should not have discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.
- All staff should be trained and able to use student/body-positive language to explain the code and to address code violations.
- 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 or ombudsperson and appeals process.
- Enforcement for students should be limited to safety and non-violence/non-discrimination and will not include messages based on body maturity.
- Violations should be treated as minor on the continuum of school rule violations.
- Students should never be removed from a classroom for a dress code violation unless they are violating the 'Students Cannot Wear' and 'Students MUST Wear' sections of the dress code. Loss of class time should be avoided or kept to a minimum.
- Students should never be forced to wear extra school clothing (that isn't their own) when they are in violation of the code. Students should be presented with a variety of options to rectify the situation. This could include but is not limited to: personal on-site clothing, school-offered clothing, and delivery of alternate clothing.
- Parents/guardians should never be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day unless by student request.
- No student should be disproportionately affected by dress code enforcement because of gender, race, body size, or body maturity.
- 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, measuring/commenting on straps, skirt length, or cleavage, asking students to account for their attire in the classroom, and directing students to correct a dress code violation during instructional time.

2018-19 Pilot

This revised administrative regulation shall be piloted during the 2018-19 school year. The Superintendent or designee shall gather the input of students, staff, and parents/guardians on the effectiveness of implementation. Specific data collected shall include the frequency of dress-related disciplinary action. Results and recommendations shall be presented to the board of education no later than December 2018 and May 2019. The Superintendent or

designee shall, no later than May 2019, present final recommendations for the continuation of this administrative regulation including any recommended revisions.

Regulation ALAMEDA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved: August 25, 2009 Alameda, California

Revised: July 6, 2018