

Student Dress

Definitions

1. **Attire:** Clothing, including outerwear, headwear, accessories such as scarves or jewelry, and shoes.
2. **Grooming:** Makeup, tattoos, and hairstyle.
3. **Dress Code:** A set of parameters determined by the Bethany Public School District (District) that describes standards for student attire and grooming.
4. **Protective Hairstyle:** Includes, but is not limited to, wigs, headwraps, and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists, Bantu knots, afros, and afro puffs.

Basic Dress Code

1. **Minimum Safe Attire:** Student attire and grooming must permit the student to participate in learning without posing a risk to the health or safety of any student or school personnel.
 - a. Students must wear clothing including both a shirt with pants or skirt or the equivalent (dresses, leggings, yoga pants, shorts, sweatpants).
 - b. Shirts and dresses must have fabric in the front and on the sides (under the arms).
 - c. Clothing must cover undergarments.
 - d. Fabric covering breasts, genitals, and buttocks must be opaque.
 - e. Hats are allowed to be worn on campus but not inside the school building unless with the permission of administration.
 - f. Hoodies must allow the face and ears to be visible to school staff.
 - g. Shoes which are safe and appropriate for weather, course assignments, athletic and other conditions.
 - h. Clothing must be suitable for all scheduled classroom activities, including physical education, science labs, and other activities where unique hazards exist. Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as sports uniforms or safety gear.
2. **District Dress Code:** Attire or grooming depicting or advocating violence, criminal activity, use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, or hate speech are prohibited. All Bethany Public School District students are expected to comply with the requirements of the policy and this regulation. Specifically:
 - a. Clothing may not depict, advertise, or advocate the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other controlled substances.
 - b. Clothing may not depict pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
 - c. Clothing may not use or depict hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.
 - d. Clothing must not pose a threat to the health or safety of any other student or staff.
 - e. Enforcement must accommodate clothing worn by students as an expression of sincerely held religious beliefs (headscarves, for example) and worn by students with disabilities (protective helmets, for example).

3. **Parent Responsibility:** The responsibility for the dress and grooming of a student rests primarily with the student and his or her parents or guardians. Parents or guardians are responsible for ensuring student compliance with the school dress code.
4. **Student Responsibility:** All students are responsible for complying with the District dress code during school hours and school activities.
5. **Staff Responsibility:** To equitably enforce the District dress code, teachers, administrators, and all school staff must be notified of the policy and this regulation at the beginning of the school year with a refresher in early spring in regards to its purpose and spirit, and how to enforce it without shaming students or disproportionately impacting certain student groups. Staff should be guided by the dress code policy and follow the letter and spirit of the District dress code.
6. **Enforcement:** When a school staff member or school administrator discusses a dress or grooming violation with a student, it is recommended that another adult should be present and at least one of the two adults should be the same sex as the student. Unless there is an immediate concern, a student should not be spoken to about a dress code violation in front of other students.

Enforcement is to be consistent with the District's overall discipline plan. Violations should be treated as minor on the continuum of school rule violations. No student is to be disproportionately affected by dress code enforcement because of protective hairstyles, gender, race, body size, or body maturity.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-51

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