

## STUDENT DRESS CODE

The South Portland School Board is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and nurturing educational environment conducive to student learning. The Board recognizes the right of students to express themselves through their choice of personal attire and affirms that the primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parents/guardians.

The Board is committed to equitable educational access for all students, and this student dress code does not differentiate based on race (including, but not limited to, traits associated with race involving hair texture, Afro hairstyles and protective hairstyles such as braids, twists and locks), color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical or mental disability, or national origin.

The Board values for the student dress code are:

1. All students should be able to dress comfortably for school without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
2. Teachers can focus on teaching without the additional and often uncomfortable burden of dress code enforcement.
3. Students should not face unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
4. Reasons for conflict and inconsistent identification of possible infractions should be minimized whenever possible.

While student dress and appearance are the responsibility of students and their parents, the Board believes that dress and appearance should not interfere with any aspect of the educational process and expects that dress and appearance are consistent with Board policies. Student attire may not interfere with the health or safety of any student, nor contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines, standards, and implementation procedures for student dress during the school day and during other school-related activities.

### **Guidelines:**

In keeping with the goals of the South Portland School Department to provide a safe, healthy, and non-discriminatory environment for educating students for maximum academic and social development, the following guidelines have been established:

Students must wear:

- Shirt
- Bottom (e.g. pants, sweatpants, shorts, skirt, dress, and leggings)
- Shoes (curricular-specific and activity-specific shoe requirements are permitted).
- Certain body parts must be covered for all students. Clothes must be worn in a way such that the chest, pelvic/groin area and buttocks are covered with non see-through material.

Students may wear:

- Attire of their choice that is otherwise not prohibited (See Section 3 below)
- Attire that aligns with their gender, gender expression, or gender identity.
- Religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.

- Hats, hoods, and headwear (so long as the student's face is visible and wearable technology is visible to ensure it is not interfering with instruction and student safety)
- Ripped jeans, as long as undergarments are not exposed
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps, halter tops, and strapless tops
- Athletic attire
- Clothing with commercial or athletic logos provided they do not violate Section 3 below.

Students are not permitted to wear attire, including wearable technology, that is disruptive to the school environment, that promotes illegal or harmful activities, or that could endanger the health or safety of that student or others during school hours and school-related activities. Prohibited attire includes, but is not limited to:

- Attire that depicts profanity, hate speech, obscenity, the use of weapons, or violence;
- Attire that promotes use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal or harmful products;
- Attire that promotes, implies or contains sexually suggestive messages;
- Attire that exposes or reveals the chest, pelvic/groin area, and buttocks;
- Visible underwear or bathing suits (Visible waistbands or straps on undergarments worn under other clothing are not a violation.);
- Helmets or headgear that obscure the face, except as a religious obligation, observation of a religious holiday, or for a school-related activity;
- Attire that depicts gang affiliation;
- Attire that contains language or symbols that demean an identifiable person or group or otherwise infringes on the rights of others;
- Attire that causes or is likely to cause a material disruption, a substantial disorder to school activities or the orderly operation of the school, or an invasion of the rights of others;
- May damage school property;
- Wearable technology and other attire when it interferes with instruction or student safety.

Cross Reference: JIC System-Wide Student Code of Conduct  
JICIA Weapons, Violence & School Safety

Revised: March 8, 1976  
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