

Hand Middle School 2024-2025 School-Wide Dress Code Expectations



**“One Hand, One Voice”
2024-2025**

Hand Beliefs

We believe...

- Fostering positive relationships is the foundation to children reaching their fullest potential in an environment conducive for learning;
- Promoting pride in each other and our school is foundation to educating the whole child; and
- Elevating opportunities and expectations is the foundation for children developing honorable character, achieving academic and artistic success in preparation for college and career.

Mission

We are Richland One, a leader in transforming lives through education, empowering all students to achieve their potential and dreams.

Parents, students, teachers, support staff, administrators, and the community *share* the responsibility for advancing the school's mission.

Dress Code Expectations

Our values are:

- All scholars should be able to dress comfortably for school and engage in the educational environment without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- Scholar dress code enforcement should be consistent, but not result in unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
- School staff should be trained and able to use trauma-informed approaches to explain the dress code and to address code violations.
- Teachers should be allowed to focus on teaching without the additional and often uncomfortable burden of dress code enforcement.
- Reasons for conflict and inconsistent and/or inequitable discipline should be minimized whenever possible.

Our scholar dress code is designed to accomplish several goals:

- Maintain a safe and orderly learning environment.
- Allow scholars to wear comfortable clothing to school.
- Allow scholars to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender.
- Allow scholars to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Prevent scholars from wearing clothing or accessories with offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, and pornography.
- Prevent scholars from wearing clothing and accessories that denote, suggest, display or reference alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia or other illegal activities.
- Prevent scholars from wearing clothing or accessories that reasonably can be construed as being or including content that is racist, lewd, vulgar, or that contains fighting words, speech that incites others to imminent lawless action, defamatory speech, or speech that threatens others.
- Ensure that all scholars are treated equally within the school environment with regards to dress.

Rights and Responsibilities

Parent/Guardian Responsibility: The responsibility for the dress and grooming of a scholar rest primarily with the scholar and his or her parents or guardians. Parents or guardians are responsible for ensuring scholar compliance with Hand Middle School's dress code.

Scholar Responsibility: All scholars are responsible for complying with the dress code during school hours and school activities.

Staff Responsibility: To equitably enforce Hand Middle School's dress code, teachers, administrators and all school staff are responsible for knowing the dress code policy. School administrators and teachers will be trained to understand the purpose/spirit of the code, the actual code, and how to enforce with the least impact on scholar learning and self-confidence.

Minimum Safe Attire

Hand Middle School expects that all scholars will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or any school sponsored event. Scholar dress choices should respect Richland One's intent to provide a safe and orderly school environment as related to scholar dress (RCSD1 BOC Policy AR JICA-R) and that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. The primary responsibility for a scholar's attire resides with the scholar and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The school is responsible for seeing that scholar attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any scholar, and that the dress code enforcement does not reinforce any stereotypes or group marginalization.

#1 Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all scholars at all times

Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, and breasts are fully covered with opaque fabric. All items listed in "must wear" and "may wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as sports uniforms or safety gear.

#2 Scholars MUST wear*, while following the basic principle above:

- A shirt with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms, AND
- Pants/jeans/leggings (for example: skirt, sweatpants, leggings, shorts, or a dress), AND
- Shoes.
 - Clothing must cover undergarments.
 - Shirts and dresses must have fabric in the front and on the sides (under the arms).
 - Shirts must cover from one armpit across to the other armpit.

#3 Scholars MAY wear, AS LONG AS these items do not violate the basic principle above:

- Religious headwear as required by one's faith.
- Fitted pants, including opaque leggings and skinny jeans.
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed and any rips or holes occur beyond mid-thigh area.
- Tank tops
- Athletic attire.
- Hoodie sweatshirts, as long as the hood IS NOT worn in the building.

#4 Scholars MAY NOT wear:

- Violent language or images.
- Images or language depicting/suggesting drugs, alcohol, vaping or paraphernalia, gang-related images/statements (or illegal item or activity).
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.
- Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments
- Swimsuits
- Accessories that could be dangerous or could be used as a weapon (chains, hooks, etc.)

- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance). Headwear may ONLY be worn outside and is NOT ALLOWED to be worn in the building (accommodations regarding headwear may be made at the discretion of Hand Middle School teachers, staff and administrators)
- Slippers or footwear without a backstrap
- Pajamas allowed when special permission is given (pajama day for example)

#5 Dress Code Enforcement

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently, in a manner that is bias aware, affirms the scholars' identity, protects privacy, and uses the requirements below.

- Scholars will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of an extreme dress code violation as outlined in Section 1 and 4 above. Scholars in simple violation of Section 1 and/or 4 will be provided three options to be dressed more to code during the school day by the teacher within the first 5-10 minutes of the class period:
 - Scholars will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
 - Scholars will be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day. A "scholar closet" will be maintained in a central location.
 - If necessary, the scholars' parent(s) may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the scholar to wear for the remainder of the day.
- If a scholar is in violation, the classroom teacher should refer the scholar to the designated counselor or administrator. If a scholar is required to change their clothing, the scholar's parent will be contacted by the designated counselor or administrator.
- If a scholar is granted an accommodation regarding headwear by a teacher, staff, or administrator, they will be given a pass for that day.
- No scholar should be subjected to differential treatment or affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.
- Scholars should not be shamed or required to display their body in front of others (scholars, parents, or staff) in school. Shaming could include, but is not limited to:
 - Kneeling or bending over to check attire fit.
 - The measuring of clothing (strap width, skirt length)
 - Asking scholars to account/explain their attire in the classroom or hallways in front of others.
 - Calling out scholars publicly for apparent dress code violations in a manner that could be perceived as embarrassing to the scholar.
 - Accusing scholars publicly of "distracting" other scholars with their clothing
- Dress code violations as outlined in Section 1 or 4 will be documented in ABE by staff members if repeated incidences of noncompliance with the code occurs, administrators reserve the right to apply formal discipline including, but not limited to: 1) parent phone call, 2) detention, 3) in-school suspension, 4) out-of-school suspension.
- Administration reserves the right to have the final say with regards to the interpretation of the dress code and whether a scholar is truly in violation. If something isn't blatantly inappropriate, our goal is to keep children in their classrooms and avoid unnecessary referrals. However, a safe and orderly learning environment must be maintained at all times.

Definition of Terms

Minimum Safe Attire

Scholar dress/attire and grooming must permit the scholar to participate in learning without posing a risk to the health or safety of any scholar or school district personnel.

Bias-aware

Bias-aware refers to being aware or acknowledging the existence of attitudes, reactions, stereotypes and categories, both conscious and unconscious, that affect behavior and understanding.

Differential Treatment

Differential Treatment refers to a type of discrimination wherein an individual, because of one or more of the prohibited grounds under Richland One's Non-Discrimination Policy, is treated differently and or excluded from consideration by seemingly standard policies or practices,

resulting in substantive unequal treatment, distinction, exclusion or preference that imposes a burden upon, limits and or withholds equal access or benefits.

Headwear

Headwear refers to coverings or accessories for the head, such as hats, caps, bonnets, and scarves or other fabric.

Parent/ Guardian

Parent/ Guardian refers to an individual who is on record with the school as a parent or legal guardian of a scholar at the school.

Shaming

Shaming in this instance refers to any judgmental behavior that reinforces discriminatory cultural rules/expectations related to dress, body, gender identity, gender expression and or sexuality

Sizist

A Sizist refers to prejudice based on the grounds of a person's size. Sizist usually refers to extremes in physical size, such as very tall or short, extremely thin or obese.

Scholar Dress

Scholar Dress refers to the ways in which scholars express themselves through clothing, headwear, footwear and other accessories, hairstyles, jewelry and makeup.