



Minneota Public School District

Policy 504

Adopted: August 17, 2010

Revised: April 2025

504 STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to enhance the education of students by establishing expectations of dress and grooming that are related to educational goals and community standards. Students and their families have the primary and joint responsibility for student clothing and appearance. Teachers and other district staff should exemplify and reinforce student clothing and appearance standards and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school environment.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The policy of this school district is to encourage students to be dressed suitably for school activities and in keeping with community standards.
- B. A student's clothing or appearance may not materially and substantially disrupt or interfere with the educational mission, school environment, classwork, or school activities. A student's dress or appearance may not incite or contribute to substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others or pose a threat to the health or safety of the student or others.
- C. Students' rights to choose their dress and appearance for school and school-related activities will be protected provided that the clothing:
 - 1. does not injure people or damage property;
 - 2. does not materially and substantially disrupt or interfere with the educational process or classwork;
 - 3. does not interfere with the requirements of discipline in the operation of the school or school activities, materially disrupt classwork;
 - 4. does not involve substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others.
- D. Appropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Clothing appropriate for the weather.

2. Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard.
 3. Clothing appropriate for the activity (i.e., physical education or the classroom).
 4. Footwear that does not present a safety hazard.
 5. Headwear, including hats or head coverings, are allowed provided that it does not cover the student's face to the extent that the student is not identifiable. Headgear must not interfere with the educational process. Hoodies must allow the face and ears to be visible from the front and sides and must not interfere with the line of sight to any student or staff including while the student wearing the hoodie is seated. Students may wear headgear for a medical or religious reason.
- E. Inappropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:
1. "Short shorts," skimpy tank tops, tops that expose the midriff, and other clothing that is not in keeping with community standards.
 2. Clothing bearing a message that is lewd, vulgar, or obscene.
 3. Apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors.
 4. Communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, or approves, advances, or provokes any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals as defined in Policy 413.
 5. Objectionable emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects or pictures on clothing or jewelry communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, evidences gang membership or affiliation, or approves, advances, or provokes any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals as defined in MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413.
 6. Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property.
- F. Hats are not allowed in the building except with the approval of the building principal (e.g., student undergoing chemotherapy; medical situations, student religious practice or belief).
- G. The intention of this policy is not to abridge the rights of students to express political, religious, philosophical, or similar opinions by wearing clothing on which such messages are stated. Such messages are acceptable as long as they are not lewd; vulgar; obscene; libelous; do not denigrate, harass, or discriminate against others on the basis of protected class status under the Minnesota Human Rights Act; or do not violate school district policies prohibiting discrimination, bullying, violence, harassment, or other harmful activities.
- H. "Gang," as defined in this policy, means any ongoing organization, association or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of one or more criminal acts, which has an identifiable name or

identifying sign or symbol, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or whose members engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity. “Pattern of gang activity” means the commission, attempt to commit, conspiring to commit, or solicitation of two or more criminal acts, provided the criminal acts were committed on separate dates or by two or more persons who are members of or belong to the same criminal street gang.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. Enforcement of a student dress code will be approached with careful consideration and sensitivity, with the goals of supporting students as they express themselves and pursue their full potential, of not shaming students, and of minimizing loss of instructional time. When possible, dress code matters should be addressed privately with students, should seek to determine whether factors exist that impact the student’s ability to comply with the dress code, and should seek to address such issues.
- B. When, in the reasonable judgment of the administration, (1) a student’s clothing or appearance may materially and substantially disrupt or interfere with the educational mission, school environment, classwork, or school activities; (2) may incite or contribute to substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others; or (3) pose a threat to the health or safety of the student or others, the student will be directed to make modifications. Parents or guardians will be notified. Other consequences may be enforced in line with Policy 506 (Student Discipline).
- C. The administration may recommend a form of clothing considered appropriate for a specific event and communicate the recommendation to students and parents or guardians. A school district or charter school must not prohibit an American Indian student from wearing American Indian regalia, Tribal regalia, or objects of cultural significance at a graduation ceremony.
- D. Likewise, an organized student group may recommend a form of dress for students considered appropriate for a specific event and make such recommendation to the administration for approval.

Legal References: U. S. Const., amend. I
Minn. Stat. § 124D.792 (Graduation Ceremonies; Tribal Regalia and Objects of Cultural Significance)
Minn. Stat. § 363A.03, Subd. 36a (Definitions)
Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1969)
Stephenson v. Davenport Cmty. Sch. Dist., 110 F.3d 1303 (8th Cir. 1997)
D.B. ex rel. Brogdon v. Lafen, 217 Fed.Appx. 518 (6th Cir. 2007)
B.W.A. v. Farmington R-7 Sch. Dist., (8th Cir. 2009)
Madrid v. Anthony, 510 F.Supp.2d 425 (S.D. Tex. 2007)
Lowry v. Watson Chapel Sch. Dist., 540 F.3d 1303 (8th Cir 2008)
B.H. ex rel. Hawk v. Easton Area School Dist., 725 F.3d 293 (3rd Cir. 2013)
Hardwick v. Heyward, 711 F.3d 426 (4th Cir. 2013)
Hicks v. Halifax County Bd. of Educ., 93 F.Supp.2d 649 (E.D. N.C. 1999)
McIntire v. Bethel School, Indep. Sch. Dist. No. 3, 804 F.Supp. 1415, 78

(W.D. Okla. 1992)
Olesen v. Board of Educ. of Sch. Dist. No. 228, 676 F.Supp. 820, 44 Educ.
L.Rep. 205 (N.D. Ill. 1987)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 525 (Violence Prevention)