STUDENT APPEARANCE

The District and the Board, in accordance with Iowa Department of Education guidance[1] and compliance with Iowa Code 208.22[2], believe that student dress codes should support equitable educational access and should not reinforce gender stereotypes[3]. Student dress codes and administrative enforcement should not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, household income, gender identity, or cultural observance.

Our values are:

- All students should be able to dress comfortably for school without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- All students and staff should understand that they are responsible for managing their own personal "distractions" without regulating individual students' clothing/self-expression.
- Teachers can focus on teaching 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.

I. GOALS OF A STUDENT DRESS CODE

A student dress code should accomplish several goals:

- 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.

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[1] Iowa Department of Education: Dress Code - https://educateiowa.gov/resources/legal-resources/legal-lessons/dress-codes

[2] UNIFORM SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS, §280.22 - https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/280.22.pdf

[3] This policy has been adapted from Oregon NOW Model Student Dress Code - https://noworegon.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/01/or_now_model_student_dress_code_feb_2016__1_.pdf

- Prevent students from wearing clothing with profanity, hate speech, and/or pornography.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing with 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.
- Hairstyles - Allow students to wear a hairstyle that is historically and contemporarily associated with race, culture, family, community, or religious practices*(braids, dreadlocks, twists, and "protective hairstyles")[4]

II. RECOMMENDED DRESS CODE POLICY

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. It is also the responsibility of the district to ensure that student attire does not contribute to any bullying/harassment or shaming that could create a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student.

Students should be given the most choice possible in how they dress for school. Any restrictions must be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and must be explained within the dress code.

These district student dress code and enforcement policies apply to the entire district and take steps to ensure that all schools in the district adopt and follow them. Student dress codes will not be enforced in different ways that result in inequities within districts or in ways that are inconsistent with the law or other district intent.

1. Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for *all* students

Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, and nipples are covered with opaque material. Cleavage should not have coverage requirements. All items listed in the "must wear" and "may wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

[4]H. R. 5309 "The Crown Act" - https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr5309/BILLS-116hr5309rfs.pdf

2. **Students <u>Must</u> Wear: ***
   - Top: Shirt/Dress
   - Bottom: pants/sweatpants/shorts/skirt/dress/leggings (There will be no restriction on the length of shorts/skirts/dresses so long as they do not expose genitalia or buttocks)
   - Shoes: activity-specific shoes requirements are permitted (for example for sports)

* High-school 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 girls' bodies or promoting culturally specific attire, or gender-specific requirements.

3. **Students <u>May</u> Wear:**

   - Hats, including religious headwear
   - Hoodie sweatshirts (over the head is allowed)
   - Fitted pants, including leggings, yoga pants, and "skinny jeans"
   - Midriff baring shirts
   - Pajamas
   - Ripped jeans
   - Tank tops, including spaghetti straps, halter tops, and "tube" (strapless) tops
   - Athletic attire [5]
   - Clothing with commercial or athletic logos

4. **Students <u>Cannot</u> Wear:**

   - Violent language or images.
   - Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity) or the use of the same.
   - Hate speech, profanity, pornography. [6]
   - Images or language that create a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class.

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[5] Ensure athletic uniforms are appropriate and modified if requested. All student-athletes should be able to wear uniforms that are appropriate for their sport. For example, swimmers should be allowed to modify their swim uniform, provided it does not provide any competitive advantage. Similar accommodations should be made for equipment, such as cups, bras, or other undergarment safety requirements.

[6] Iowa City Community School District, Policy No. 502.3R1 – Section C " Limitation to Student Expression"

https://www.iowacityschools.org/our-district/school-board/board-policies/board-policies-details/~board/board-policies/post/5023r1-student-expression-and-student-publication-code

- Bathing suits.
- Helmets or headgear that obscure the face (except for religious observance or medical purposes).

III. TRAINING FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS & STUDENTS

A school dress code is most effective when school administrators and teachers are trained to *understand and embrace* the intent of the code, how to *apply and enforce* the code equitably, and how to *talk about* the dress code and the reasoning behind it.

- School administrators and teachers should be trained to understand the purpose/spirit of the code, the actual code, and how to enforce it with the least impact on student learning and self-confidence.
- School administrators and teachers must enforce the district dress code consistently once it is adopted. Discretion should be exercised consistently and in ways that do not result in discriminatory enforcement.
- School staff should be trained and able to use student/body-positive language to explain the code and to address code violations.

IV. DRESS CODE ENFORCEMENT AT SCHOOLS

A school dress code is only as effective and fair as its enforcement. Historically, school dress codes have been written and enforced in ways that disproportionately impact girls, students of color, and gender-expansive students.[7]

- 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 the 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. [8]
- 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.

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[7] Adapted from Alameda Unified School District, Regulation 5132: Dress and Grooming

[8] BodyWHYs: The Eating Disorders Association \of Ireland - What can teachers do to promote positive body image?

- Enforcement for students should be limited to safety and non-violence/non-discrimination and should not include messages predicated on body maturity or "professionalism."
- 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 except where a dress code violation also substantially interferes with the orderly education process or student safety. Loss of class time should be avoided or kept to a minimum.
- No student should be disproportionately affected by dress code enforcement because of gender, race, body size, or body maturity.
- Students should never be forced to wear extra school clothing (that isn't their own) when they violate the code. That is akin to a dunce cap or scarlet letter. 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.
- Students' parents 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.
- The dress code should be clearly conveyed to students, not just in the student handbook which rarely gets read, but in other ways, too, such as posters, newsletters, etc...

- Students should not be shamed or required to display their bodies 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 straps or skirt length, asking students to account for their attire in the classroom, and directing students to correct a dress code violation during instructional time.
- School staff will not disclose any information that may reveal a student's transgender status or known/perceived gender fluidity to others, including parents or guardians and other school staff unless legally required to do so or unless the student has authorized such disclosure.[9]

Evaluation: The Superintendent or designee shall annually review the effectiveness of this policy and determine, as appropriate, if any further review or revision is required.

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[9] ICCSD LGBTQ+ Administrative Guidelines page 5 section "Privacy and Confidentiality"

V. TEACHING ABOUT CONSENT + SEXUAL HARASSMENT: A STEP BEYOND DRESS CODE

Schools have a role to play in setting clear anti harassing policies and in teaching curricula that promote positive messages about consent-only sexual activity or other physical contact.

Consent: Schools should teach all students and administrators and teachers about consent (no means no) so there is a clear message that individual students are responsible for their actions and that consent is a must before any sexual or other physical contact.

Sexual Harassment: Schools should have clear and well-publicized anti-sexual harassment policies for students and staff. Schools should educate students and staff to not engage in sexual harassment and to recognize what it is and how to address it.