

SCHOOL UNIFORM AND APPEARANCE POLICY

I. Purpose

The Pitt County Board of Education believes a safe and disciplined learning environment is the first requirement of a high performing school. The implementation of school uniforms will help minimize disruptive behavior, promote respect for oneself and others, build school/community spirit, and, more significantly, help to maintain high academic standards. The Board also feels that wearing of uniforms by students will help lessen the impact of socioeconomic differences. In addition, it allows for identification of intruders on campus and encourages students to concentrate on learning rather than on what they are wearing.

II. Information Dissemination

On a yearly basis, school officials will communicate with parents/guardians information concerning the uniform policy by using one or more of the following: newsletters, parent forums, PTA meetings, Parent Advisory Council meetings, TV and radio announcements, flyers and posters.

III. Appearance

In addition to being required to wear school uniforms, all students are to be groomed and dressed appropriately for school and school activities. A student's dress and/or appearance shall:

1. Support, not disrupt, the learning environment
2. Constitute no threat to health or safety
3. Be tasteful and unable to be construed as provocative or obscene
4. Reflect practices of good hygiene and cleanliness

IV. Reasonable consideration shall be made for those students who, because of a sincerely held religious belief or medical reason, request a waiver of a particular guideline for dress or appearance. The waiver request shall be in writing from the parent or guardian and approved by the principal and/or principal's designee on an annual basis. In considering a waiver request, the principal and/or principal's designee have the right to request additional documentation from medical officials and/or religious leaders.

V. Reasonable accommodation shall be made by the principal for students involved in special duties, activities, or projects approved by the school. This would include but not be limited to athletics, career and technical education, P.E. classes, special events, and other activities that require non-conforming dress on a school campus during a school-sponsored event.

VI. Financial Considerations

Parents and/or guardians who have concerns about the affordability of a school uniform should contact the school social worker. The social worker will assist the family with identifying community resources. The school system will not be responsible for funding uniforms for any students.

VII. School Uniform

The principal and/or principal's designee will implement the school uniform and appearance policy in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate.

Good judgment in considering issues such as age, developmental stages, and body type are expected of all students, parents, and guardians in the selection of school attire and appearance. The manner of a student's wear of the school uniform shall be neat, clean, properly fitted, age-appropriate and suitable for the learning environment.

Requirements

A. Shirts

1. Shirts must be solid white, black, navy, or up to two additional colors designated by the individual school (see PCS School Color Chart).
2. Students must wear long or short-sleeved shirts with a collar. Shirts may have one or two chest pockets.
3. With the exception of school approved logos, shirts may not have insignias, logos, labels, words, or pictures. Shirts with school approved logos must have collars.
4. Shirts must be appropriately sized and tucked in unless the shirt is designed for outside wear and is no longer than 3 inches below the natural waist.
5. Shirts shall be long enough to cover the midriff when sitting or standing. Furthermore, shirts must cover the chest and back so the chest and the back of the body are not inappropriately exposed.
6. Undergarments may not be visible at any time. Students may wear T-shirts or camisoles which are plain white, black, navy, or one of the additional designated school colors under collared shirts (see PCS School Color Chart).

7. No see-through or mesh clothing that will reveal the body or will reveal undergarments shall be allowed.
8. Clothing shall be worn appropriately (correctly sized; not inside-out or backwards; no rolled up pants legs, etc.).

B. Pants, Skirts, Skorts, Jumpers, Capri Length Pants, Shorts

1. Colors: solid khaki, black, or navy.
2. No denim of any color is allowed.
3. Must be free of graphics and embroidery. With the exception of small labels, they may not have insignias, logos, words, or pictures.
4. Shorts, skirts, skorts and jumpers shall be modest and of sufficient length. The length of these articles of clothing shall be no shorter than three inches above the top of the knee when standing.
5. No pants or shorts with pockets halfway down the legs.
6. Clothing must be appropriately sized. No baggy or sagging pants or shorts are allowed. No "low rise" clothing is allowed. Pants must be worn with the waistband at or above the hipbone.
7. Clothing shall be worn appropriately (not inside-out or backwards; no rolled up pants legs, etc.).
8. No see-through or mesh clothing that will reveal the body or will reveal undergarments shall be allowed.
9. If belts are worn, they must be solid black or brown with a plain belt buckle that is not oversized. All belts must be buckled.

C. Dresses

1. Dresses may be solid white, black, navy, khaki, or the school color (see PCS School Color Chart).
2. Students may wear long or short-sleeved dresses with a collar. Dresses may have one or two chest pockets.
3. With the exception of school approved logos, dresses may not have insignias, logos, labels, words, or pictures.

4. Dresses must cover the chest and back so the chest and the back of the body are not inappropriately exposed.
5. Dresses shall be modest and of sufficient length. The length of the dress shall be no shorter than three inches above the top of the knee when standing.
6. Undergarments may not be visible at any time. Students may wear T-shirts or camisoles which are plain white, black, navy, or one of the additional designated school colors under collared shirts (see PCS School Color Chart).
7. No see-through or mesh clothing that will reveal the body or will reveal undergarments shall be allowed.

D. Shoes

1. Shoes shall be worn at all times, and, as needed, shoes shall conform to special requirements (such as P.E. classes, ROTC, science labs, etc.).
2. Shoes that have laces shall be laced and tied.
3. No bedroom shoes shall be allowed.

E. Outerwear

1. Students may wear plain unhooded sweaters, sweatshirts, or vests including those made out of lightweight fleece material over school uniforms. The items may be solid white, black, navy, or one of the additional designated school colors (see PCS School Color Chart). Down vests and denim vests or jackets are not acceptable.
2. Light weight fleece jackets, which are the school approved colors and do not have a hood, are allowed.
3. Sweaters and sweat shirts, which are the school approved colors, with the exception of school approved logos, may not have insignias, logos, labels, words, or pictures. Sweaters and sweat shirts with school approved logos may not have hoods.
4. Coats
 - a. Coats may not be worn inside the school building during the school day.

- b. Coats may be worn during a class change if the student is exiting the building.
- c. Coats may be worn to school and placed in the student's locker. If a locker is not available, it may be hung in the classroom or another location designated by the principal and/or the principal's designee.
- d. The principal and/or the principal's designee may make an exception if the building/classroom is unusually cold.

5. School Spirit Wear

Principal approved school spirit wear such as club and/or organizational jackets, letter jackets, etc. may be worn in the high schools.

F. Other Clothing Items or Accessories.

- 1. Students may not wear large pendants or medallions.
- 2. No adornment is allowed that reasonably could be perceived as, or used as, a weapon (such as chains, spikes, etc.).
- 3. No gang-related clothing, accessories, symbols or intimidating manner of dress, as identified by local law enforcement agencies, are allowed.
- 4. No headwear and no sunglasses shall be worn inside school buildings.
- 5. No bandanas shall be allowed.
- 6. Solid color, pattern or stripe ties may be worn. They may not have any insignias, logos, labels, words, or pictures.
- 7. Leggings and footed tights may be worn only as an accessory under skirts, skorts, dresses, shorts, pants, or capris that meet uniform requirements. They must be solid white, black, or navy.
- 8. No jeggings allowed.
- 9. Only school activity buttons, approved by the principal are permitted to be worn on a student's school uniform.

G. Other Uniform Requirements

1. Students are expected to be dressed according to the uniform standards at all times school is in session.
2. Students who are taking classes that require a special dress code (such as JROTC or career and technical education internships) may wear that uniform to other classes.
3. Students who take a class at another school must wear the uniform shirt of their home school.
4. Principals may make exceptions to the uniform policy for special events such as jeans day. However, Jeans Day is limited to once a month and no more than 9 times a year.
 - Jeans Day must be a reward for positive behavior or fundraising for a cause that benefits all the students at the school.
5. Clothing designed for school athletic events (i.e. cheerleader outfits, etc.) that does not meet the above guidelines shall not be worn during the instructional day unless appropriate additional garments are worn with the outfit.

VIII. Process to Amend School Colors

Once every three years, starting with 2010, schools may recommend school color changes to the Board of Education in December to be implemented in the 2011-2012 school year provided they have given all students and parents the opportunity to vote on the proposed changes. 70% of the voting students and parents must support the proposed changes before they are recommended to the Board of Education. Prior colors will be grandfathered for one year.

IX. Enforcement

The principal and/or principal's designee shall ensure that the policy is enforced in a consistent manner and require the student and the student's parent or guardian to take appropriate action to remedy situations determined to be in conflict with this policy. Disciplinary action shall be taken for violation of the School Uniform and Appearance Policy in accordance with the Pitt County Board of Education Code of Student Conduct. (Board of Education Policy 10.206 and Procedure 10.206)

Appropriate disciplinary actions for violations may include the following:

First Offense: Students shall be informed that they have violated the policy. They shall be given the opportunity to change into acceptable clothing by using available clothes at school or by calling a parent/guardian to bring clothes. If neither of these options is used, the students may be placed in in-school suspension or isolation for the remainder of the day.

Second Offense: A second infraction of the policy may be considered as defiance. In addition to the disciplinary actions available for a first offense, a parent/guardian conference may be held.

Third (and additional) Offenses: A third or additional infraction of the policy may be categorized as a Category I Offense as outlined in the Pitt County Board of Education Code of Student Conduct (Policy 10.206 and Procedure 10.206-P), subject to the consequences outlined therein, including out-of-school suspension.

Disciplinary action may vary when a student has a record of other student conduct violations during the current school year.

Students who do not comply with the School Uniform and Appearance Policy also may be excluded from participating in certain school programs, including graduation ceremonies. Copies of the School Uniform and Appearance Policy shall be made available to students and parents.

Students new to Pitt County Schools will be given a two week grace period from enrollment to obtain and wear the proper school uniforms.

Adoption: June 18, 2007

Last Revision: June 1, 2009, November 3, 2008

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -390, -391

Cross References: Policy 10.206 (Code of Student Conduct).