

## **P1473 STANDARDIZED DRESS CODES-REGULATIONS**

### **BOARD POLICY**

**A standardized dress code regulation may be adopted by a school. The school administration, staff, Site Council, and parents must have opportunity for input in determining what type of standardized dress is most suitable for the students at that school. Each school which chooses to adopt a standardized dress regulation in lieu of free dress must have a plan that includes: rationale of school purpose for the more restrictive standardized dress regulations; information about how the standardized dress regulations are equally enforced for all students; a procedure authorizing exemptions to compliance for those students whose parents object because of religious, philosophical, or economic circumstances; and, a procedure for reassignment of students whose parents object because of religious, philosophical, or economic circumstances.**

Administrative Implemental Procedures:

1. Principals interested in investigating the potential implementation of standardized dress code for their school will submit written notification to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent.
2. The school Site Council, school staff, and parents shall be informed of the investigation to determine the feasibility of standardized dress and given the opportunity to be involved in the discovery process and assist in establishment of the regulation. Development of the regulation shall not be delegated to a small group of persons.
3. After the proposed regulation is drafted, each staff person and each family with enrolled children shall be given a copy of the regulation with instructions on how to have input into the finalization of the standardized dress regulation.
4. Each staff member and family unit with enrolled children shall be provided a ballot and have at least one opportunity to vote for or against implementation. At least 75% of all staff members and family units casting votes must vote "yes" before a school may implement a standardized dress regulation.
5. If the regulation receives sufficient support to be implemented each family/parent shall be provided a copy of the regulation with a written explanation of the regulation and its effective date. The regulation shall not take effect earlier than the first day of the next school year following the school year during which it was approved. The regulation shall be included in the student handbook so each student receives a copy.
6. Each parent who objects to the standardized dress regulations will have the opportunity to present an objection in writing to staff for their consideration. An objecting parent has the burden to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence that an exception is warranted by producing evidence that a deeply and sincerely held religious or philosophical creed forbids compliance with the policy or that adverse financial circumstances render compliance an unreasonable burden on them and an unreasonable barrier to the student's education. In considering whether an exception should be granted, staff may require sworn statements or other documented proof.

7. Where the objection is based on religious beliefs, staff should require credible proof that the objection is firmly based on historical religious tenets that can be verified, which clearly precludes the student(s) from complying with the standardized dress code. Where the objection is based on philosophical grounds, staff should require credible, verifiable proof that the objection is firmly based on beliefs that are purely ethical or moral in source and content, but that nevertheless impose upon the student(s) a duty of conscience to refrain from compliance with the dress code. In this regard, staff should require evidence that clearly and convincingly demonstrates that such philosophical beliefs occupy, in the life of the parent(s) and student(s) requesting the waiver, a place parallel to that filled by God in traditionally religious persons.
8. Staff should adhere to the following procedure in considering objections from parents:
  - a. The parent completes and signs a standardized dress waiver form available in the school office stating the basis of the objection and the reasons therefor. The form shall notify the parent of the opportunity to appear before the building level committee or to submit further evidence to the committee in writing.
  - b. The waiver and any additional evidence submitted by the parent are reviewed by a building level committee, consisting of a building administrator, staff, parent, and/or site council representative. If the parent has requested the opportunity to appear, the parent's statements will be weighed in considering the objection.
  - c. If the objection is denied by the school committee, the parent may request that the school committee submit a written report to the district level committee for review. The district level will review the school committee's decision. The decision of the district level committee is final.
  - d. If the parent chooses not to have their student comply with the decision of the district level committee, the district will facilitate finding another school within the district where the student may attend.
  - e. If the waiver is granted and the student is not transferred, the building administrator will work with the parent(s) to develop a modified version of the standardized dress that will permit substantial compliance without violating the religious or philosophical creed and does not impose an undue economic hardship.
9. Each school with standardized dress regulations will have a written plan to assist students with economic need to obtain the standardize dress.
10. If a transfer request is granted to a student whose parents object because of religious, philosophical or economic circumstances, the district will provide transportation for the student to the new attendance site in accordance with district policy on special transfers. If a transfer is denied because the parents have not proven that their objection is based on religious, philosophical or economic circumstances, the student may be reassigned, and transportation will not be provided for the student to the new attendance site.
11. Schools electing to initiate or continue standardized dress must comply with the following district-wide guidelines:
  - a. The standardized dress shall consist of a minimum of at least two solid colors for bottoms and tops, with no logos, pictures, or writing.
  - b. Tops must cover the shoulders, upper chest, and must be long enough to cover skin at the

- waist. No see-through clothing will be permitted.
  - c. Schools may choose to disallow denim or T-shirts.
  - d. The standardized dress regulations must be reasonable and allow for some latitude in fabric and style of tops and bottoms.
  - e. Belts shall be worn if bottoms contain belt loops.
  - f. Clothing shall be sized correctly to fit the student.
  - g. Tops, authorized by the school, reflecting the school's name or logo may be worn at the discretion of the school.
  - h. Standardized dress regulations may permit free dress days to be designated from time to time under appropriate circumstances, at the discretion of the site administrator.
12. Any wearing apparel which, in the opinion of the building administrator, is associated with gangs and/or drugs and/or becomes disruptive to the educational process may be banned.
13. The regulation when adopted and published shall include a prefatory statement of the purpose or rationale behind the regulation, such as:
- a. To promote an atmosphere of discipline and learning that enhances academic achievement.
  - b. To value students for their character, by providing an equal socio-economic footing for all and eliminate "label competition."
  - c. To foster a school's sense of "community" by enhancing self-respect, school pride and students' self-esteem.
  - d. To lessen distractions in the classroom.
  - e. To increase campus safety and security by, among other things, making the presence of intruders immediately apparent.
  - f. To uphold modesty standards.
  - g. To minimize costs to parents.
14. The standardized dress policy shall be reviewed and voted upon at least every two years by the school. Each staff member and family unit with enrolled children shall be provided a ballot and have at least one opportunity to vote for or against retaining the previously implemented standardized dress regulation. At least 50% of all staff members and family units casting votes must vote "yes" in order to retain a previously implemented standardized dress regulation.

Administrative Responsibility: Elementary and Secondary Education Offices

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