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The board believes that the appearance and the conduct of its employees are of supreme importance in establishing a positive climate for learning and for presenting a good example for students. Therefore, the board affirms its expectations that all personnel shall be cleanly, neatly, and appropriately attired for the work to be done. An employee's dress must not disrupt or distract from the educational process and must be in accordance with health and safety standards and practices.

Employee dress and appearance is important to the school system's climate and should be professional, and enhance rather than detract from that climate. Dress and appearance, including footwear should be appropriate, based on the following factors:

- The nature and environment of the work;
- Health and safety factors;
- The nature of the employee's public contact and the normal expectations of outside parties with whom the employee will work;
- The employee's interaction with students;
- The effect of inappropriate dress on school climate.

Based on these factors, the following guidelines are established:

1. It is expected that an employee's dress or appearance will not disrupt the educational process. Employees shall be clean, neat, and appropriately attired.
2. The dress and appearance of employees should be appropriate to the type of work performed, with reasonable accommodation when the nature of an employee's work is unique.
3. Uniform dress may be required for certain categories of employees such as food service and maintenance personnel.

The following are considered inappropriate for employees:

- Clothing which is revealing – bare midriffs, shirts with spaghetti straps, low cut necklines, shorts, or skirts that are shorter than knee length;
- Clothing which, by word or symbol, promotes alcoholic beverages, tobacco or the use of controlled substances or that contains profanity or nudity, depicts violence or is sexual in nature.
- Clothing which reveals undergarments;
- Jewelry affixed to the body other than to the ears;
- Body art which is disruptive or obscene;
- Clothing which is tattered or ragged;

- Clothing which disrupts or is provocative by being overly tight to the body;
- Blue denim pants or shorts, commonly known as “blue jeans”.
- Any item of clothing that creates a disruption in the school environment or learning activities or that poses a threat to the safety and well- being of students or staff.

Administrative and supervisory personnel shall set a good example in personal appearance and good manners and shall encourage and expect employees to dress in accordance with the board’s expectations. The principal or supervisor may approve variations in employee dress for special situations such as field trips, spirit days, class or team days, workdays, (when there are no parent conferences or meetings involving the public) or for those individuals whose responsibilities may necessitate an alternate form of dress such as physical education teachers, vocational education instructors, coaches, and auxiliary personnel.

Reasonable accommodations shall be made by the appropriate supervisor for those employees who, because of a sincerely held religious belief or medical reason request a waiver of a particular part of this policy for dress or appearance.

An employee’s immediate supervisor shall make an initial determination of whether an employee’s dress or appearance is a violation of guidelines. If the supervisor determines that the employee’s dress or appearance is inappropriate, the supervisor shall counsel the employee regarding appropriate attire that is consistent with this policy and shall determine whether the employee is allowed to remain at work or must leave work to change his/her dress. Any failure to follow the supervisor’s directive and/or blatant violation or repeated violations of this policy may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

Legal References: G. S. 115 – C (36), (47)

Cross References: Prohibition Against Discrimination and Harassment (policy 1710/7230)

Adopted: October 13, 2008