

Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code: 4316	Issued Date:
STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE	Rescinds:	Issued:

The Orange County Board of Education respects a student’s right to choose his or her style of dress or appearance. The Board of Education requires students to appear at school fully clothed and groomed in an appropriate manner consistent with the establishment and continuance of a proper atmosphere for learning. Good grooming promotes pride and good behavior. Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirement of a good safe school environment. If a student’s dress or lack of cleanliness is such that it constitutes a threat to health or safety, the principal or principal’s designee may require the student and student’s parent or guardian to take appropriate action to remedy the situation. In addition, if a student’s dress or appearance is so unusual, inappropriate or lacking in cleanliness that it clearly disrupts class or learning activities, the student may be required to change his or her dress or appearance. Appropriate action may include having a parent/guardian bring appropriate clothes to school or sending a student home to change into more appropriate attire.

Principals will maintain guidelines to assist students in determining appropriate dress and appearance for school. A copy of this policy will be distributed to all students each year. Reasonable accommodations will be made by the school principal or principal’s designee 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. Reasonable accommodations shall be made by the principal to accommodate students involved in special duties, activities, or projects approved by the school. This would include but not be limited to: athletics, vocational classes and projects, special events, or other activities that would allow for non-conforming dress on a school campus.

Items listed below shall apply to all students:

- No student’s appearance or clothing will be acceptable if it is deemed disruptive, provocative, indecent, vulgar, or obscene, or if it endangers the health or safety of the student or others.
- Hats, sweatbands (or other head coverings), or sunglasses are not to be worn inside school buildings.
- No bandanas or gang-related clothing or styles are permitted before, during, or after school hours, or at any school-sponsored/school related function.
- Any adornment such as chains or spikes that reasonably could be perceived as or used as a weapon; and any symbols, styles or attire frequently associated with intimidation, violence or violent groups will not be permitted.

- Students are not to wear halter tops/tank tops, clothing that reveals underclothes or lack thereof, see-through clothes, undershirts or clothing bearing lewd/vulgar or offensive themes/remarks (including tee-shirts advertising alcohol or tobacco products). Sleeveless blouses are permissible if undergarments do not show and chest area and underarms are not exposed.
- Clothing must be worn appropriately (nothing inside-out or backwards, no rolled up pant legs, no shirts worn half on and half off, or unfastened bib overalls; belts must be buckled and worn at the waist line).
- Clothing must not reveal midriff, backs, cleavage, or chest/torso area. Shirts and blouses must cover the waist and go past the waistline.
- Coats must fit and be appropriate for the season.
- No sagging pants are allowed. A belt is required if pants do not remain at the waist.
- Tight clothing such as knit or spandex bicycle/biker pants or overly tight pants are not allowed.
- Skirts, dresses, and/or shorts may be no higher than mid-thigh.
- Proper footwear is required. Shoes that have laces must be laced, tied and fit. No bedroom slippers or shower shoes are allowed.
 - For elementary schools, high heels and platform shoes are dangerous for young students. They are not able to walk well in them and may trip when trying to run. Flip-flops and backless sandals present similar problems. Shoes that are firmly attached to the feet are required.

Legal Reference(s): G.S. 115C-36, -47, -288, -307, -390, -391, -392