

Being guided by decisions of recent court cases and taking into account the personal freedoms granted by the Constitution, the Cherokee County Board of Education adopts this Dress Code for students, teachers, and other personnel who directly impact the education environment during the school day and at other school sponsored activities. The sole purpose of this code is to insure that each school setting has a learning atmosphere that is free of disruptions caused by the grooming/attire of the individuals who interact there.

In keeping with this philosophy and intent, all students and Cherokee County School employees will:

1. Dress and groom themselves so as not to jeopardize their own safety or safety of others;
2. Not dress or groom themselves so as to reveal, accentuate, or call attention to their anatomy;
3. For all school activities, wear clothing that:
 - a) Is appropriate for the specific occasion or activity;
 - b) Acceptably covers the body. (Community customs and mores will determine "acceptability." For the school system, the test of whether or not the body is "acceptably covered" will be to determine whether or not the apparel disrupts the learning process.);
 - c) Bears no printed message or symbol that is deemed profane or obscene to the point that it would be disruptive to the educational environment;
 - d) Bears no printed message or symbol that is counter-productive to the teachings of the school curriculum (For example, messages that appear to support the use of alcohol and drugs would contradict the teachings of the Alcohol and Drug Defense curriculum.);
4. Not include as part of their attire any accessories (jewelry, badges, body art – not limited to but including – body piercing and tattoos, etc.) that would violate this Code in any way.
5. Employees of Cherokee County Schools are expected to adhere to a professional dress code that exceeds the expectation of the student dress code.

As a corollary to these Code items - which in the main are designed to discourage disruptive dress within the school setting - the Cherokee County Board of Education recognizes the traditional high standards of dress and grooming practiced by its students and employees. They, furthermore, urge that all individuals who constitute the school community be governed more by the highest standards of professional and decorous dress than by the prohibitions and specifications of the Code listed above.

This Code will be enforced by the authorized administrators and supervisors of each sub-group of interacting individuals. Teachers and principals will enforce the Code for students; principals will be responsible for enforcing the Code among the teachers; lunchroom managers, among cooks; the superintendent, among principals; etc.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The Board of Education respects a student's right to choose his or her style of dress or appearance. However, students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirement of a good school environment. If a student's dress or lack of cleanliness is

such that it constitutes a threat to health or safety, the principal may require the student and the 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 and substantially disrupts class or learning activities, the student may be required to change his or her dress or appearance.

Principals will maintain guidelines to assist students in determining appropriate dress for school, copies will be made available to parents and students. The following items are specifically prohibited for students in grades K– 12:

- Hats or other head coverings* inside buildings;
- Sunglasses inside buildings;
- Sheer or see-through blouses or skirts unless full garment is worn underneath;
- Tank tops or muscle shirts when worn alone; [inappropriate dress at all grade levels include clothing that reveals back, midriff, or cleavage. Tops must have straps at least 1-inch wide wide.]
- Any skin-tight clothing (biker's pants, etc.);
- The hem length of shorts and skirts must be at the end of the fingertips or mid-thigh, whichever is closer to the knee.
- Garments with slogans, patches or buttons that are suggestive, vulgar, racially intended or provocative;
- Garments that advertise or display drugs, alcoholic beverages, tobacco or sex;
- Clothing that exposes midriffs or cleavage; [At the High School and Middle School levels, this is further defined as no midriff exposure when standing, sitting, or reaching,]
- Clothing with excessive holes exposing student immodestly.
- Pants worn below waist that expose undergarments. [Outerwear must cover underwear.]
- P.E. clothing must be changed before entering the main hall.

**Unless approved by the Principal or his/her designee.*

Any style of clothing tending towards immodesty by exposure or excessive emphasis of bodily features will not be considered appropriate dress for school. Loose fitting, Bermuda-type shorts or "skorts" are permitted in grades K– 12 (not to be confused with running or tennis shorts).

Judgment of questionable dress will be made on a case-by-case basis by the principal or his or her designee. Any clothing deemed by the school administration to be unacceptable or disruptive to the educational process may be prohibited. The parents or guardians will be notified when their child has been found in violation of the dress code. Those students violating the dress code will be removed from class and sent home to change clothes immediately.

The principal has the authority to interpret this policy and thus ensure its consistent enforcement.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -390.2

Cross References: Student Behavior Policies (policy 4300), School Plan for Management of Student Behavior (policy 4302), Disruptive Behavior (policy 4315)

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