



Report on Standard School Attire

To: The Metropolitan Nashville Board of Education

From: The Standard School Attire Study Committee

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Purpose

Metro Nashville Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and secure school environment. In addition, a proper learning atmosphere is essential for the education of each student.

The MNPS Standard School Attire Committee has concluded Standard School Attire is an effective strategy to promote enhanced student appearance and behavior, which are key ingredients of a positive learning environment in which student safety and achievement are the highest priorities.

In general, the Standard Attire Committee believes Standard Attire contributes to improved behavior, a decrease of discipline incidents, an improved school climate, and the decreased access of trespassers to schools during class time.

Specifically, the Committee believes Standard School Attire will:

1. Create an environment where students can be more focused on learning.
2. Enhance school safety by making it more difficult to conceal weapons or contraband.
3. Reduce distraction and diminished sense of self-worth caused by teasing or competition over clothing.
4. Minimize disruption caused by inappropriate clothing at school.
5. Make the cost of school clothing more affordable.
6. Create a greater sense of community and school pride among students.
7. Prepare students for their future roles in the professional workplace.
8. Create an atmosphere reflecting the seriousness of purpose about education.

Based on these factors, the MNPS Standard School Attire Committee recommends adoption of Standard Attire beginning with the Fall Semester of 2007.



Recommendations for a MNPS Standard Operating Policy on Standard School Attire

A. Definition of Standard School Attire

Acceptable Attire in all Metro Schools

- A) Pants, shorts, capri pants, skirts, skorts or jumpers in the colors of navy blue, black or any shade of khaki.
- B) Shirts with short or long sleeves and a collar (polo, dress-style with or without buttons, or turtleneck), in the solid colors of white or navy blue.
- C) All shirts should be properly buttoned and tucked inside pants, shorts or skirts.

Acceptable Attire in Individual Metro Schools

In addition to the districtwide Standard School Attire, individual schools may designate up to four additional solid colors for acceptable styles of shirts.

B. Implementation Details

Students' dress and grooming will be appropriate, clean and neat. Clothes and appearance must be safe and not disruptive to the educational process.

General Requirements

1. The Standard School Attire policy will be in effect during both the school year and summer program.
2. Students will wear clothing of appropriate size. Appropriate sizes are defined as no more than one size smaller or one size larger than the student's actual clothing size. Pants, shorts, capri pants, skorts or skirts must fit at the waist and must not sag.
3. The district will not require specific brands of clothing. Logos or manufacturer trademarks, if any, must be no larger than two inches. School logos are permitted and are not limited in size.
4. All clothing must be hemmed. No drawstrings, cut-offs or rolled-up cuffs are allowed on pants, capri pants, shorts, dresses or skirts.

Pants, shorts, capri pants, skirts, skorts, jumpers or dresses

1. Full-length pants, cropped pants, and straight-legged capri pants are permitted. Pants, capri pants, and shorts must be dress style or casual-dress style (e.g., Dockers®). Pants must be straight-leg or boot-cut.

2. Pants, shorts, skirts and skorts with elastic waistbands must be worn at the waist and do not require a belt. All other pants, shorts, skirts and skorts must be worn at the waist, and those with belt loops must be worn with a belt.

3. Shorts, jumpers, skirts or skorts must extend below the fingertip. Dresses of the acceptable length are permissible if they have a collar, short or long sleeves and are a solid color approved by the district or school.

Shirts and tops

1. All blouses and shirts should be properly buttoned and tucked inside pants or skirts. Chests and midriffs must be covered.

2. T-shirts with or without sleeves may be worn as undergarments. They must be solid white, navy blue or one of the additional solid colors approved by the school and may not display any writing, pictures or images.

C. Additional Clothing

1. A single blazer, suit jacket, vest, sweater, or cardigan is permitted as a garment that may be worn over the Standard Attire top. These garments must be in one of the district- or school-approved solid colors and must be worn over a shirt or dress with a collar.

D. Attire for Special Occasions

1. The principals of individual schools may allow exceptions to the Standard School Attire policy for schoolwide activities up to 10 days per year. Such exceptions would include a particular mode of attire for special occasion days such as School Spirit Week or for particular school-sponsored or school-related activities during the course of the school day.

2. In addition, principals will have the authority to approve occasional variations from Standard School Attire for particular groups of students. For example, athletic team members or cheerleaders may wear their sports-top layered over a collared or turtleneck shirt, or members of school clubs may wear club-related or school-sponsored T-shirts over a collared or turtleneck shirt. Such attire will be tucked in at the waist whenever practical as determined by the principal. Standard Attire pants, shorts, skirts, capri pants or skorts must be worn at all times.

E. Footwear

1. Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times. Laces on shoes or sneakers must be tied. No house shoes are allowed.

F. Assistance with Standard School Attire

1. The principal of each school will establish procedures and maintain a minimum inventory of required student clothing to provide emergency clothing to students who do not have the required Standard Attire. Funding to support this resource may be drawn from community donations and other sources available to the school.

2. In addition, MNPS will coordinate with schools, businesses, religious organizations and community groups to open clothing banks for receipt of donated School Attire. While MNPS is not required to provide such Attire to students because of low-income status, the donated items will be made available at no cost to students who demonstrate financial need. The identity of the child or family accessing the source because of their financial status will not be disclosed.

G. Standard School Attire Prohibitions

1. Denim jeans of any color and hooded sweatshirts are not permissible. This restriction does not apply to after-school activities such as athletic events.

2. Blouses or shirts without buttons along the front opening are not acceptable.

3. Outerwear such as raincoats, windbreakers and cold-weather jackets and coats may not be worn in the school.

4. Torn clothing is prohibited. In addition, no see-through clothing is to be worn.

5. Clothing that advertises substances that are illegal for teens (drugs, alcohol, tobacco products) or language or writing that is otherwise inappropriate or offensive (sex, profanity, racial or ethnic slurs, gang related attire, etc) may not be worn.

6. Tattoos that display drugs, alcohol or tobacco products, or gang- or sex-related words or images must not be seen at anytime.

7. The following items are not permissible: chains, spiked accessories, oversized jewelry, oversized belt buckles or belt buckles with concealed weapons. Belts may not hang down as a “tail” from the belt loop.

8. Inappropriate head coverings such as bandanas, scarves, sweatbands, caps, do-rags, or hairnets are not to be worn or seen during school time or school functions.

H. Standard School Attire Provisions

1. Students may wear the uniforms of nationally-recognized student organizations at their schools on days specified by the organization (e.g., JROTC, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts) and approved by the school.

2. Where the bona fide religious beliefs, medical or special education needs of a student conflict with the Standard School Attire policy, the schools will provide reasonable accommodation. Parents or guardians desiring accommodation for their child shall notify their school principal in writing of the requested accommodation and the factual basis for the request. Approved coverings worn as part of a student's bona fide religious practices or beliefs shall not be prohibited under this policy.

3. District or campus personnel will not discriminate against any student who has been exempted from the mandatory use of Standard School Attire because of objections based on bona fide religious, medical or special education needs.

4. Students who believe their school has not reasonably accommodated his or her request based on bona fide religious, medical or special education needs may submit a written request for review to the appropriate Tier Director. The Tier Director or his/her designee will review the matter and respond in writing to the student's concerns within a reasonable period of time.

5. No portion of the Standard School Attire policy shall be construed as in conflict with a student's Constitutional right to free expression.

I. Compliance

School administrators and teachers are encouraged to use positive reinforcement to obtain compliance with Standard School Attire requirements. However, when a student fails to comply with the School Attire policy, discipline is appropriate. The following discipline procedures will apply:

First Offense

1. A student whose clothing or accessories violate the Standard Attire policy may be removed from class with a chance to correct and return to class.
2. Such correction may include use of school-provided clothing, if available, until the end of the school day. If such correction is not obtained, the student may be removed to in-school suspension either for the remainder of the day or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school.
3. The infraction will be communicated to the parent or guardian.

Second Offense

1. One day of in-school suspension.
2. For elementary schools or in unusual situations, the in-school suspension may take place in an alternative setting as determined by the principal.
3. The infraction will be communicated to the parent or guardian.

Third Offense

1. One day of in-school suspension.
2. An “overnight” or “provisional” suspension. This one-day, out-of-school suspension is waived if parents accompany the student to the school the following morning for a conference with the principal or his/her designee.
3. The infraction will be communicated to the parent or guardian.

Subsequent and Repeated Infractions

Repeated violations of the Standard School Attire policy will be treated as disruptive behavior and/or defiance of school authority. These violations may result in out-of-school suspensions as prescribed in the 2006-2007 Student Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Due Process (Suspensions, Page 13).

Academic Consequences

In-school suspension for violation of the Standard School Attire policy will not affect a student’s academic standing.

Fresh Start

Violations of the Standard School Attire policy will not carry over from the previous semester or school year.

J. Authority of MNPS

The District reserves the right to modify this policy as necessary. The District and individual schools reserve the right to determine what may be disruptive and unsafe.