

6402.1 Introduction

A safe and disciplined learning environment is essential to maximize student achievement and to ensure that students reach their full potential. The Pamlico County Board of Education believes that a school dress code is a positive and cost effective way to create a more unified, positive, and safe school climate focused more strongly on the learning process. Research has demonstrated that an appropriate school dress code increases school safety by minimizing disruptive behavior, decreasing violence, helping prevent gang activity, instilling and improving discipline, and helping maintain the focus on learning. It is expected that a school dress code will promote respect for teachers, staff and students, build school spirit, decrease unhealthy competition involving fashion trends and dress, ease the strain on parental clothing budgets, reduce incidences of violence, prevent inappropriate messages relating to violence, drugs and sex and allow for easy identification of intruders on campus.

For all of these reasons, the Pamlico County Board of Education has implemented a mandatory school dress code for students in grades kindergarten through twelve.

6402.2 Student and Parent Notification

It is the responsibility of the school principal to communicate the information contained in this policy so that students and parents are able to comply with the school dress code requirements.

6402.3 School Dress Code

6402.3.1 Shirts and Blouses

6402.3.1.1 Shirts and blouses must be collared and have sleeves. Pullover shirts, known as golf or polo shirts, turtlenecks, and button-down shirts or “oxford” shirts are acceptable.

6402.3.1.2 Shirts and blouses must be solid, striped, or plaid in color.

6402.3.1.3 Shirts and blouses may not bear any emblems, insignias, logos, or slogans, other than that of the student’s individual school unless the emblem is no larger than the size of a credit card.

6402.3.1.4 Shirts and blouses are to be tucked into bottom wear (pants/trousers/capris/skirts/shorts/skort/s/blue jeans) at all times.

6402.3.1.5 Baggy/oversized shirts and blouses are not permitted.

6402.3.2 Bottom Wear

6402.3.2.1 Boys may wear shorts, pants, or jeans. Girls may wear shorts, pants, skirts, skorts, capris, or jeans. Leggings, jeggings, and/or tights may not be worn in the place of pants.

6402.3.2.2 Navy, black, and khaki-colored shorts, pants, skirts, skorts, capris, and jeans are approved for wear. Bottom wear with more than one color will not be permitted. Bottom wear may not bear any emblems, insignias, logos, or markings other than small brand name and that will be no larger than 2 x 3 inches in size.

6402.2.3.3 Baggy/oversized pants are not permitted. Pants and shorts with side pockets, known as “cargo” pants and shorts, may not have more than six pockets.

6402.2.3.4 All bottom wear must be worn at waist-level. Girls only may wear the “hip hugger design” bottom wear, but the shirt/blouse must be tucked into the bottom wear. In grades 6-12, a belt shall be worn with bottom wear that was manufactured with belt loops. In grades K-5, belts will be encouraged as appropriate.

6402.2.3.5 The length of shorts, skirts, skorts, dresses, and jumpers cannot be shorter than three (3) inches above the knee. Students shall not roll up one or both legs of shorts or pants.

6402.3.3 Dresses/Jumpers

6402.3.3.1 Girls may wear dresses/jumpers that are solid, striped, or plaid in color. Dresses must have a collar and sleeves. Jumpers must be worn with a collared shirt or turtleneck with sleeves.

6402.3.4 Sweaters, Sweatshirts, and Undershirts

6402.3.4.1 Sweaters, sweatshirts, and vests made of cloth or nylon may be worn over a collared shirt with sleeves. A sweater/sweatshirt or vest is not to be worn in lieu of a collared shirt.

6402.3.4.2 Sweaters, sweatshirts, vests, and undershirts may not bear any emblems, insignias, or logos or slogans, other than that of the student’s individual school, unless the emblem is no larger than the size of a credit card. In addition, sweaters, sweatshirts, vests, and undershirts shall not have a hood.

6402.3.4.3 Sweaters and sweatshirts must be waist-banded and worn no more than two (2) – three (3) inches below the waist.

6402.3.4.4 Baggy/oversized sweaters, sweatshirts and vests are not permitted.

6402.3.4.5 For students in grades K-12, “hoodies” are not authorized for wear at any time during the school day and/or during activities listed in Section 6402.3.10.

6402.3.5 Jackets/Coats

6402.3.5.1 Jackets must be appropriately sized and may not be baggy or oversized. Jackets may be worn in the building if they follow the dress code.

6402.3.5.2 Coats must be removed and placed in a designated area at the start of a student’s instructional day. In grades 9-12, coats will be placed in lockers.

6402.3.6 Shoes

Spiked heels are prohibited and bedroom shoes are prohibited and oversized shoes are not authorized. Shoes must be tied and properly fastened at all times.

6402.3.7 Headwear

Headwear may not be worn inside the school building. This includes, but is not limited to: bandanas, rags, headbands, scarves, hats, combs, etc.

6402.3.8 All clothing, to include shoes, must be the appropriate size for the student. For example, the waist of the bottom wear should not be bunched or overlapped when a belt is worn. The length of the crotch should be in close proximity of one’s crotch. Shirts, to include undershirts, should not be excessive in length and the shoulder seams should be within one (1) inch of the shoulder.

6402.3.9 Holes/tears in shirts/blouses, bottom wear, or any attire is prohibited.

6402.3.10 Extracurricular Activities

6402.3.10.1 Students participating as a member of a team and/or group in after school events continue to represent our community and Pamlico County Schools. Dressing inappropriately many times gives our community members or members of other communities a poor impression of the many positive things being accomplished by our students and our school system.

6402.3.10.2 Students participating in an event to include after school, weekend, and summer school sponsored activities to include, but not limited to athletic events, band/chorus performances, NJROTC events, are to comply with dress code policy;

6402.3.10.3 Coaches, directors, and event chairpersons are to ensure that students comply with the dress code policy. Students who do not comply will be reported to the

school administration and disciplined in accordance with school discipline procedures, and discipline measures as stipulated by the school athletic policy.

6402.4 Discipline

Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Generally, each school should strive to achieve full compliance with this policy through the use of positive reinforcement and incentive measures. Students transferring in from other school districts will have a one-week grace period before compliance becomes mandatory but must still abide by the provisions in Section 6402.5.8 General Prohibitions.

A student in violation of the school dress code may be subject to various measures. For initial or minor violations, simply notifying the student of the violation and immediately correcting the problem may be sufficient. Violations also may result in the imposition of discipline, particularly for repeated or blatant violations that demonstrate a conscious decision not to adhere to the school dress code requirements.

The principal or designee shall have discretion to determine whether a particular violation shall be handled informally or whether discipline shall be imposed. When discipline is deemed appropriate, the following progressive disciplinary measures will generally apply:

6402.4.1 1st Disciplinary Offense

1. Write out by hand the School Dress Code Policy.
2. Documentation will be placed in discipline file.
3. Confiscation of unauthorized items (i.e. chains, do-rags, hats, bandanas, etc.). These may be returned at the end of the school year or earlier at the principal's discretion.
4. Parent notification.

6402.4.2 2nd Disciplinary Offense

1. One (1) day in- school suspension.
2. Documentation will be placed in discipline file.
3. Confiscation of unauthorized items (i.e. chains, do-rags, hats, bandanas, etc.). These may be returned at the end of the school year or earlier at the principal's discretion.
4. Parent notification.

6402.4.3 3rd Disciplinary Offense

1. One (1) day out-of-school suspension.
2. Documentation will be placed in discipline file.
3. Confiscation of unauthorized items (i.e. chains, do-rags, hats, bandanas, etc.). These may be returned at the end of the school year or earlier at the principal's discretion.
4. Parent notification.

6402.4.4 4th Disciplinary Offense

1. Maximum 5 to 10 days out-of-school suspension.
2. Documentation will be placed in discipline file.
3. Confiscation of unauthorized items (i.e. chains, do-rags, hats, bandanas, etc.). These may be returned at the end of the school year or earlier at the principal's discretion.
4. Parent notification.
5. Possible loss of extracurricular activities and attendance to those activities.
6. Possible assignment to the Alternative Education Program.

6402.5 Special Considerations

6402.5.1 Religious or Medical Exemptions

Principals shall exercise appropriate discretion in implementing this policy, including making reasonable accommodations on the basis of students' religious beliefs or medical conditions. The superintendent shall exempt a student from wearing the designated attire when it would impose a substantial burden on a medical condition or the exercise of a sincerely held religious belief, so long as the exemption does not result in a dangerous or disruptive situation. A parent, guardian or person in loco parentis of a student shall submit to the superintendent a written statement explaining the medical condition or religious belief and how it is affected by this policy. Examples of other circumstances in which the sincerity of the religious belief has been demonstrated may be submitted. If the superintendent has reason to believe the student does not qualify for the exemption, he shall refer the matter to the Board of Education attorney for further inquiry.

6402.5.2 Exercise of Free Speech

A student wearing a non-disruptive button, armband or other accoutrement which constitutes a protected expression of free speech will not be in violation of this policy. The student may not wear such insignia as to circumvent the intentions of this policy. Administrators may regulate the size or style of such insignias to reduce disruption, but not to interfere with students' established legal rights.

6402.5.3 Financial Hardships

Upon written request to the principal, Pamlico County Schools may assist compliance by families suffering financial hardships. Assistance will be given to those families that have substantial financial difficulty in adhering to this policy.

6402.5.4 Exceptions

6402.5.4.1 The school principal may approve certain items of clothing as spirit wear or encourage spirit apparel for particular school days or events.

6402.5.4.2 The school principal may allow students to wear athletic uniforms or jerseys that are related to school activities.

6402.5.5 Interpretation of Policy

The school principal or designee shall have authority to make all reasonable decisions and interpretations regarding the implementation of this school dress code. If a student, parent or guardian has questions about whether a particular item of clothing satisfies the school dress code, the student, parent or guardian is encouraged to ask the school principal or designee.

6402.5.6 Staff and Community Involvement

The Board of Education believes that a school dress code policy is most effective when it is developed and accepted by the majority of staff and parents. The school principal shall seek input from school staff and parents in connection with the school dress code policy. The school principals may bring recommendations to the Board of Education from time to time if the school principals feel that changes or adjustments to the policy are desirable.

6402.5.7 Additional Rules by School Principal

School principals shall have the authority to make rules and regulations that are not inconsistent with this policy.

6402.5.8 General Prohibitions

Students may not wear clothing that has a reasonable likelihood of causing a substantial disruption or a material interference with the learning process. Dress and/or appearance prohibited under this section includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any adornment such as chains, spike collars or spike wrist bands, etc. that reasonably could be perceived as or used as a weapon;
2. Any symbols, styles or attire (such as bandanas) frequently associated with intimidation, violence, gangs, or violent groups;
3. Articles of clothing that are patently offensive to race, creed, color, or sex;
4. Attire with messages or illustrations that are lewd, indecent, or vulgar;
5. Attire, jewelry, or buttons that display or promote drugs, smoking, alcohol, sex or violent behavior;
6. Belts with excessive metal rings/materials and belt buckles in excess of two (2) inches;
7. Excessively short or tight garments, such as, form fitting spandex material, nylons, denims are prohibited. Leggings, jeggings, and/or tights may not replace pants;
8. Excessively loose fitting clothing;
9. Exposed undergarments;
10. Head covering of any kind (hats, do-rags, bandanas, etc.);
11. Hoodies are prohibited.
12. Holes/tears in any attire (usually not from wear);
13. Jewelry affixed to the nose, tongue, cheek, lip, eyebrow, or any part of the facial area less the ears – only piercing of the ears will be permitted;
14. Pajamas and/or lingerie;
15. Sagging pants - pants should not drag the ground when standing;
16. Skirts, shorts, skorts, jumpers, dresses shorter than three (3) inches above the knee when standing;
17. Sunglasses inside of school building to include on top of head;
18. Sweaters and sweatshirts lower than two (2) – three (3) inches from the waistline; and
19. Tank tops, net shirts, see-through tops, halter tops, spaghetti-strap tops, and open midriff tops.

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