

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board shall be that no mode of attire shall be considered proper for school wear that disrupts the classroom and/or the school's positive learning environment. In questions regarding student dress and grooming, the principal or his/her designee of each school shall make the final decision as to what is considered proper or improper dress according to the guidelines provided.

The School District desires to teach each student to use good judgment in his/her total appearance so that the attention of others is not distracted from the purpose of the school. Cleanliness and the values of the community shall be a basic consideration.

NOTIFICATION

The School District shall notify the parent or guardian of each student of the dress code specifications and their effective date. Dress code guidelines are as specified in the *Student Handbook*. The dress code shall be distributed in written form or posted on the school's website annually.

If the School Board adopts a uniform policy or modifies the existing uniform policy, it shall notify, in writing the parent or guardian of each student of the policy adoption or uniform policy modification at least sixty (60) days prior to the effective date of the new or revised policy. Each school shall display any uniform selected for a reasonable period prior to the proposed effective date for wearing of the uniform.

However, nothing shall prohibit the School Board from requiring a new or revised dress code or uniform policy without the required notice in the event of an emergency. For the purposes of this policy, *emergency* shall mean an actual or imminent threat to health or safety which may result in loss of life, injury, or property damage.

DRESS AND PERSONAL GROOMING

Student dress and grooming are not to adversely affect the students' participation in classes, school programs, other school-related activities or detract from the learning environment of the school. Extremes in style and fit in student dress and extremes in style of grooming will not be permitted. Administrators are authorized to use their discretion in determining extremes in styles of dress and grooming and what is appropriate and suitable for school wear. No student shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, blade, symbols, sign or other things which are evidence of affiliation with drugs, alcohol, violence or gang related activities or exhibits profane or obscene language/gestures. Facial hair shall be neatly trimmed. Policies regarding dress and grooming stress the importance of reducing distractions that inhibit learning and are addressed as an attempt to enhance the learning environment.

The School District shall not exclude a student on account of a natural, protective or cultural hairstyle. *Natural, protective, or cultural hairstyle* shall include, but is not limited to, afros, dreadlocks, twists, locs, braids, cornrow braids, Bantu knots, curls, and hair styled to protect hair texture or for cultural significance.

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1. All students shall conform to the school uniform policy adopted at their school of attendance and conform to this parish-wide policy.
2. Uniform shirts are to be worn inside the trousers, skirt or shorts that are worn by the student. School principals are granted the authority to allow male and female students to wear their uniform shirts untucked upon request from the student's parent, legal guardian or the student. School uniform pants, shorts, skirts must be khaki material only; traditional front and rear pockets only; inside or out are acceptable. All students in grades 2 through 12 must wear a belt with their uniform pants. Hoodies, if worn, must be approved in advance by the school principal. Hoodies must be the same color as the school uniform shirt. A school uniform shirt shall be defined as: 1) A solid color long or short sleeve polo or oxford type shirt with a collar in school approved uniform colors (logos are optional and must be approved); 2) A solid color sweatshirt in school approved uniform or spirit colors (school approved logo optional); 3) A school sponsored t-shirt approved by the principal.
3. All clothing should fit well, but not too tightly and should be comfortable, neat and clean. Jackets (not hoodies or sweatshirts) can be any color, but cannot contain logos or references for alcohol, tobacco, profanity, vulgarity, or any other reference that is disruptive to the educational process.
4. Bare midriffs will not be acceptable in any grade. Skirts, dresses and shorts must be no shorter than six (6) inches above the floor when kneeling.
5. Students must wear acceptable footwear. Any type of footwear that is inappropriate, unsafe, or distracting is not acceptable. Examples of unacceptable footwear: cleats, flip flop type, house shoes, crocs, etc.
6. Boys and girls must wear their hair in a standard, acceptable style. Hair in rollers or curlers, excessive teasing, beehives, hair in the face or any other style that is detrimental to the student's performance of the normal school activities is prohibited. No student shall wear a hair style which is distracting to other students in the performance of school learning activities. Naturals will be accepted if neat. Unnatural hair color is not permitted, i.e. blue, purple, green, etc. The principal shall have the final authority to determine whether or not a hairstyle meets acceptability standards.

7. The use of excessive or unusual make-up is prohibited.
8. If boys have facial hair, it must be neatly trimmed.
9. The wearing of hats, caps, hoodies or headdress of any type will be permitted only for specific health reasons as prescribed by a treating physician, for the practice of a religious custom or belief: or outside during period of inclement weather.
10. No dark glasses shall be allowed unless prescription lens are allowed.
11. Vulgar or suggestive writing on clothing is not acceptable. Tight body suits and/or biker shorts will not be permitted.
12. All t-shirts and any other similar garments worn underneath the school uniform shirt must be completely white in color and be without writing or artwork.
13. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.
14. In grades 7 through 12, all book bags, back packs, other tote bags, handbags and purses brought to school grounds must be clear or mesh bags only. A purse or handbag may contain a cosmetic sized bag no larger than 5.5 inches by 7.5 inches for privacy purposes.
15. The principal will make the final decision relative to any questionable pattern of dress in his/her school.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS

The Morehouse Parish School Board or a school within the jurisdiction of the Morehouse Parish School Board may issue student identification cards containing such photographic and other information as the school deems appropriate.

In the event that student identification cards are issued, each student identification card shall have printed on the card the following information:

1. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline number
2. A local suicide prevention hotline number, if available

BODY ARMOR

It shall be unlawful and against School Board policy for any student or non-student to wear or possess on his/her person, at any time, body armor on any School Board property, school campus, at a school-sponsored function, on a school bus or other school transportation, or in a firearm-free zone, with limited exceptions as enumerated in La.

Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:95.9, which includes permitting a student to wear, carry, or possess a backpack on school property or a school bus that has bullet-resistant metal or other material intended to provide protection from weapons or bodily injury.

School-sponsored functions shall include, but not be limited to, athletic competitions, dances, parties, or any extracurricular activities. A firearm-free zone means any area inclusive of any school campus and within 1,000 feet of any such school campus, and within a school bus, wherein the possession of firearms is prohibited, except as specifically set forth in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:95.2(C) and 14:95.6(B).

Body armor shall mean bullet-resistant metal or other material intended to provide protection from weapons or bodily injury.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Students who violate the dress code shall be disciplined in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

A student enrolled in grades prekindergarten through five (5) shall not be suspended or expelled from school or suspended from riding on any school bus for a uniform violation that is not tied to willful disregard of school policies.

Revised: May 7, 2024
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Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:95.9, 17:81, 17:111, 17:416, 17:416.7; Scott v. Board of Education, 304 N.Y.S.S. 2d 601 (1969); Karr v. Schmidt; 460 F. 2d 609 (5th Cir. 1972); Board minutes, 5-7-24, 6-3-25.