S-5: Administrative Procedures
Student Dress Code

SALT LAKE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Your Best Choice

REFERENCES

Board Policy S-5

DEFINITIONS

Dress Code: Set of parameters determined by each school that describes acceptable and unacceptable student apparel.
Gang Symbols: Any article of clothing, badge, sign, lettering, hairdo, jewelry, emblem, symbol, or other personal display or adornment, which is intended by the students, or is recognized or acknowledged by students or the Metro Gang Task Force to designate a gang symbol or to signify affiliation with, participation in, or approval of a gang. (See, S-3: Administrative Procedures, Student Conduct and Discipline, Section IX, and S-3: Gang Signs, Symbols, Signals, Words, and Conduct Prohibited).
Parent:
For purposes of these administrative procedures and the corresponding board policy, "parent" means:

A. a biological or adoptive parent;
B. a legal guardian or other individual legally authorized to make educational decisions for the child;
C. an individual, with whom the child lives, who is acting as a parent in the absence of a natural parent or a guardian;
D. a foster parent if the authority of the biological or adoptive parents to make educational decisions on the child's behalf has been terminated or specifically limited by a court order;
E. in the absence of any individual qualified under parts A-D, a surrogate parent appointed pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and/or
F. a stepparent if the stepparent is present on a day-to-day basis with the natural parent and child, and the other parent is absent from the home. A stepparent who is not present on a day-to-day basis in the home of the child does not have rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) with respect to the child's education records. Stepparents without guardianship of a child do not have the authority to enroll or register a child in school.

"Parent" does not include the state or any political subdivision of government.
Uniform/Standardized Dress Code: Distinctive clothing styles and/or specific colors worn by students as a means of identifying them as members of the school community.
Disruption: Reactions by other individuals to the clothing or adornment, which causes the teacher/administrator to lose the attention of students, to modify or cease instructional activities, or deal with student confrontations or complaints.

PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

I. Requirements for all School Dress Codes

A. Each school will have dress code governing student dress at school and while participating in school-sponsored activities.
B. Attire that disrupts the learning environment or creates a safety hazard is not permitted (see, definition of "disruption" above).
C. When developing or making significant modifications to the original dress code guidelines, the school community council (SCC) must allow for sufficient public discussion and input over a period of at least three months.
    1. In general, adding an additional color option for a school uniform, removing an item from the prohibited list and/or adding or deleting a specific item in response to a particular trend will not be considered a significant modification. SCCs must still provide an opportunity for public discussion and input on the proposed change during at least one meeting in which the dress code revision was listed as an agenda item.
    2. A significant modification would include, but is not limited to, revising the consequences or disciplinary actions to be imposed for dress code violations.
    3. For questions about what constitutes a significant modification, please contact the executive director of educational equity and student support, or the executive director of policy and legal services.
D. The SCC will review the gathered input and draft a proposed dress code for submission to the district.
E. The dress code should prohibit:
    1. Revealing clothing.
        a. Examples to consider include clothing that does not cover undergarments (waistbands and bra straps excluded), and clothing that does not provide opaque coverage of an individual's buttocks, genitals, and breasts.

b. Students must wear clothing, including both a top and bottom, or appropriate one-piece outfit. Shirts and dresses must have fabric in the front (covering the abdomen), on the sides (under the arms), and in the back (covering the upper and lower back).

2. Apparel advocating illegal or inappropriate behavior or language.
   a. Examples to consider include clothing or jewelry that displays obscene, profane, vulgar or pornographic words or images; that advertises or promotes racism, violence, hate groups, or the illegal use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products; or contains language, images, or symbols of a sexual/sexist nature.
3. Hats and caps.
   a. Hats and caps can be prohibited if there is a legitimate safety concern that wearing these items would prohibit a student from being identified. Other reasons for prohibiting specific hats and caps would include items that violate subsection 2 above or 4 below.
4. Gang symbols.
   a. For examples, please see the definition above.
   b. Wearing a specific color by itself will not be cause for discipline, nor will just wearing a cross or Star of David without augmentation or alteration.
   c. If appropriate, the student must remove suspected gang attire and should be given substitute clothing.
5. Bare feet or unsafe footwear.
   a. Examples of unsafe footwear to consider include flip-flops and bedroom slippers.
6. Unsafe apparel.
   a. Examples to consider include clothing, jewelry, or accessories with chains, cleats, spikes, or studs.

F. The dress code must be applied uniformly and consistently to all students regardless of gender, gender identity, race, or ethnicity.

G. Dress codes **may not** prohibit specific hairstyles or hair textures that are commonly associated with a person's race or nationality (this can be a form of race discrimination based on natural hairstyle). Protected hairstyles include but are not limited to braids, locks, and twists.

H. The dress code must include provisions outlining the consequences for dress code violations, and the due process requirements that will be provided when imposing such consequences.
   1. Students should never be ridiculed, humiliated, or embarrassed for a dress code violation.
   2. School dress code enforcement actions should minimize the potential loss of education time.
   3. School-directed changes to a student's attire or grooming should be the least restrictive and disruptive to the student's school day.

I. Accommodations/exemptions
   1. Accommodations/exemptions must be made for students with documented health or medical issues, or religious beliefs that are substantially affected by the school's dress code.
      a. Parents seeking an accommodation/exemption must submit a written request or a completed Exemption from School Uniform form to the school office.
         i. Schools generally may not prohibit the wearing of religious attire or substantially limit religious expression with a uniform requirement.
         ii. Schools must also reasonably accommodate a student's disability or medical condition as noted in the student's individualized educational program (IEP), 504 Plan, or medical documentation.
         iii. Any dress code relating to displays of words or symbols of gangs, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, racism, inappropriate language or images, or symbols of a sexual/sexist nature are not subject to waiver.
      b. The principal will approve or deny the request and inform the parent within five working days of his or her decision.
      c. If the request is denied, the parent requesting the accommodation/exemption may contact school leadership and support to review the decision.
   2. Students who identify as intersex, transgender, and gender nonconforming may also request specific accommodations as outlined in the administrative procedures for Board Policy G-24: Gender Inclusion.

J. School administrators will submit the school's proposed dress code to the superintendent and school leadership and support for approval.

K. Upon approval, the school must provide notice of its dress code and the consequences for violating the dress code to parents and students through the registration process, student handbooks, or any other reasonable means.

L. Principals, or their designees, are responsible for ensuring that the school dress code is consistently and fairly enforced and implemented.

M. SCC's shall annually review the school's dress code to ensure that it takes into account current trends and reflects the school community.

II. Establishing a Uniform/Standardized Dress Code

A. Consideration to establish a uniform/standardized dress code (hereafter referred to as "school uniform") may be initiated in one of two ways:
   1. The SCC must hold an election to consider a school uniform if an initiative petition, signed by parents of 20% of the school's students, is presented to the principal; or
   2. Based on interest expressed within the school community, the SCC may declare its intent to explore the idea of adopting a school uniform with all stakeholder groups in order to determine if there is sufficient preliminary support in the community to warrant further study.

B. Procedures for making a decision on a school uniform:
   1. If the SCC decides to move forward with its consideration of the adoption of a school uniform, the SCC chair and principal will inform the superintendent and school leadership and support of their intentions in writing.
   2. In developing a school uniform, the SCC must allow for sufficient public discussion and input over a period of at least three months.
   3. The SCC will gather public comments through a variety of methods, including community forums, cottage meetings, additional SCC meetings, PTA meetings, panel discussions, presentations, or surveys.
      a. At least one public hearing must be held.
   4. After reviewing the public's comments, the SCC will determine whether or not to put the decision to adopt a school uniform to a vote of the school community.
   5. If a vote is to be taken, the SCC will develop a proposed school uniform dress code including:
      a. Descriptions of clothing that is allowed and prohibited, i.e., colors, logos, and styles.
      b. Accommodation/exemption procedures for students with religious beliefs, or documented health or medical issues (see, Section I.H.).
      c. Projected costs associated with the uniforms.
         i. Any uniform must be generic enough to avoid financial hardships on families, and should only include ordinary articles of clothing that are readily available at reasonable prices in local stores.
         ii. Students are expected to provide their own school clothing, and uniforms are not subject to fee waivers. However, schools should work with local businesses, service organizations, retailers, and parents to ensure that appropriate provisions are made for students of limited means.
      d. Consequences to students for violations of the school uniform (see, Section I.G.).
   6. School administrators will submit the proposed school uniform dress code to the superintendent, and school leadership and support for approval prior to voting.
   7. If approved, and before the voting begins, the SCC will establish a voting process to include:
      a. providing ballots to 100% of the parents of students who will be subject to the proposed policy, including incoming grade levels from feeder schools;
      b. limiting votes to one per family;
      c. establishing that a decision will be made by a simple majority of those voting;
      d. determining strategies for increasing the number of ballots returned; and
      e. tallying the votes.
   8. After the vote has been tallied, the SCC must inform the superintendent and school leadership and support of the outcome and must publicize the outcome to the school community.
   9. If a new school uniform is adopted, the SCC will inform the parents of the new school uniform dress code at least three months prior to its implementation.

C. Annual review and discontinuance or modification of school uniform dress code:
   1. The SCC will annually review the school uniform dress code.
   2. If the SCC determines that the school uniform dress code needs to be modified or discontinued, the SCC must follow the same procedure as the procedure to initiate consideration of a school uniform dress code. See, Section II.A above.
   3. Procedures for voting to discontinue or modify a school uniform dress code are outlined in Section II.B.7.above.

4. The review and any modifications will be reported to the school community in the monthly SCC minutes.

No district employee or student shall be subjected to discrimination in employment or any district program or activity on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. The district is committed to providing equal access and equal opportunity in its programs, services and employment including its policies, complaint processes, program accessibility, district facility use, accommodations and other Equal Employment Opportunity matters. The district also provides equal access to district facilities for all youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code, including scouting groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation: Tina Hatch, Compliance and Investigations/Title IX Coordinator, 440 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111, (801) 578-8388. You may also contact the Office for Civil Rights, Denver, CO, (303) 844-5695.