



Board Policy #635.0

Student Dress Code

Document Integration Project Format

Policy Statement

The York Region District School Board believes that schools are places of learning and, to be successful, students must focus their attention and energy on school-related matters. For this reason, it is important that students dress appropriately for the task of learning. Clothing which demonstrates respect for self and others is expected at all times. A dress code for students, developed collaboratively by staff, students and parents, promotes a safe and respectful environment for learning and teaching. Each school shall establish an appropriate dress code for students.

Principals are responsible for:

- enforcing student compliance with the school's appropriate dress code;
- ensuring that students, staff and parents are aware of the school's appropriate dress code;
- ensuring that decisions regarding an appropriate school dress code are made through a process that enables the majority of parents an opportunity to provide input;
- working with school councils to develop an appropriate dress code in accordance with Board policies and procedures; and
- ensuring that a regular monitoring and review process is established.

Teachers are responsible for:

- addressing expectations for student compliance to the school's appropriate dress code.

School Councils are responsible for:

- proposing a school uniform policy in accordance with provincial regulations.

Parents are responsible for:

- ensuring their child's compliance with the school's appropriate dress code.

Students are responsible for:

- complying with the school's appropriate dress code.

Legislative Context

Education Act

Definitions

Appropriate Dress Code

Appropriate dress code refers to a standard of dress for all students that meets the school community's expectations of modesty and decency and promotes a safe and respectful learning environment. Compliance with the appropriate dress code is mandatory. The appropriate dress code is established at the school by the principal in consultation with staff, school councils, parents and students. The appropriate dress code *may* include standards for a school uniform. Appropriate dress is in effect while at school, on field trips and during any other school-related activities or events.

School Uniform

A school uniform is defined as a specific type of dress to be worn by the students. For a formal school uniform (i.e. a distinctive outfit intended to identify students as members of a specific school), or an informal school uniform (e.g. blue pants and white sports shirt), compliance could be of a voluntary or mandatory nature.

Department

Education and Community Services

Policy History

Approved 2002

Revised 2008

It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both biological/adoptive parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.



Board Procedure #635.0 Student Dress Code

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This procedure outlines actions to be followed while initiating, managing and maintaining an appropriate dress code for students. Appropriate dress is in effect while at school, on field trips and during any other school-related activities or events.

Definitions

Appropriate Dress Code Considerations

Appropriate dress code considerations are:

- the Human Rights Code;
- the Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- affordability;
- student/family mobility;
- compliance issues;
- implications and consequences for not complying with the appropriate dress code;
- students with special needs;
- ethnocultural and religious issues;
- weather;
- safety; and
- age of the students.

Pass or Fail Vote

In order to adopt a mandatory (formal) school uniform, at least 80% of all potential votes must support the proposal to pass or it fails. For example:

- a) in the case of a vote where parents and/or adult students have one vote per child in the school, if there are 1000 students in the school, the school needs to receive at least 800 affirmative votes to adopt the proposed school uniform; or
- b) in the case of a family vote where parents and/or adult students have one vote per family, if the school has 500 families in the school, the school needs to receive at least 400 affirmative votes to adopt the proposed school uniform.

Responsibilities

Principals shall:

- ensure that the school has an appropriate dress code which may be part of the school's code of conduct;
- in determining the school's appropriate dress code, take into account the appropriate dress code considerations and unacceptable dress;
- ensure that the appropriate dress code be communicated to each student, parent, and staff member within the school community (e.g. announcements, school council, code of conduct, website, student agendas, newsletters, reports and/or meetings);
- if a school uniform is adopted, make every effort to communicate the uniform requirements to future parents and students of the school (i.e. pre-kindergarten students and feeder school students);
- establish consequences for students who do not comply with the appropriate dress code;
- ensure that consequences for non-compliance are consistent with those set out in the Board's Safe Schools Policy and Procedure;
- ensure that no student is issued a consequence for not wearing the school uniform if affordability is the issue;
- monitor requests for assistance in acquiring the school uniform and be the contact for school council in addressing issues of affordability by respecting the right to privacy of the individual(s) involved;

- if a school uniform is passed, implement it as of the first day of the following school year; and
- monitor the school's appropriate dress code annually, including sharing issues, concerns and any data that has been collected (through surveys, written submissions, open forum meetings, etc.) regarding the implementation of the appropriate dress code with school council.

Teachers shall:

- share the responsibility for enforcing compliance to the appropriate dress code with the principal, staff, parents, and students.

School Councils shall:

- work with the principal to develop or revise their school's appropriate dress code;
- determine if the parent community desires a school uniform and be responsible for the initial consultation process (e.g. a survey of all families and staff);
- if the parent community desires a school uniform;
 - in determining the proposed school uniform, take into account appropriate dress code considerations and unacceptable dress,
 - consult with the principal, staff, parents, and students, including various ethnocultural and faith groups within the school community, in establishing the school uniform (through surveys, focus groups, public meetings, etc.),
 - distribute a proposed school uniform, which may contain alternatives from which to select, to all parents, students and staff,
 - if the survey does not indicate the support of at least 50% of respondents, revise the proposed school uniform accordingly, until such support is attained,
 - once 50% support is attained for the proposed school uniform, share the process that was followed to arrive at this recommendation and outline the formal voting procedure with all parents of the school,
 - establish a voluntary school uniform (formal or informal), only with the support of the parents of students in the school (or adult students),
 - establish a mandatory school uniform (formal or informal), only with the support of the parents of students in the school (or adult students) by completing a process including research, consultation, a formal voting procedure, communication and an action plan for implementation,
 - in order to introduce a mandatory school uniform, a formal vote of 80% of all potential voters must be attained,
 - clearly communicate the proposed school uniform, including a full description of the requirements, compliance (including consequences for non-compliance) and affordability issues and relevant costs, to all families in the school before the formal vote,
 - give parents the opportunity to view the proposed uniform, prior to the formal vote,
 - communicate the result of the formal vote to each student, parent and staff member within the school community,
 - determine if parents will receive one vote per family or one vote per child in attendance at the school,
 - establish timelines for the formal voting process, return of ballots and communication of the results,
 - the formal vote(s) shall be exercised by the parent or the student, if the student is 18 years of age or older,
 - ensure that the formal vote shall be to "accept" or "reject", and
 - be aware that, in order to adopt a mandatory school uniform, at least 80% of all potential voters must support the proposal to pass or it fails;
- understand that should a mandatory school uniform be passed, another formal vote would not normally be initiated for at least three years;
- in consultation with the principal, staff, students and parents monitor the appropriate dress code and/or voluntary school uniform on an annual basis and conduct a formal review of the dress code at

least every three years by seeking the views of parents, students, staff, volunteers working in the school; and

- monitor the school's appropriate dress code annually by sharing issues, concerns and any data that has been collected (surveys, written submissions, open forum meetings) regarding its implementation with principals.

Parents shall:

- if there is a voluntary school uniform, be responsible for ensuring their child's compliance; and
- if there is a decision to introduce a mandatory school uniform in an elementary school or division, or secondary school sign their willingness to support the uniform.

Students shall:

- meet the requirements of the school's voluntary school uniform if there is a decision to introduce one in their public school.

Department

Education and Community Services

Procedure History

July 2002

Revised 2008

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