

Student Dress

The manner of dress reflects on our school and on us; it plays a significant role in setting an appropriate tone for the learning environment. Students will be expected to maintain dress and appearance that is appropriate for school in this community. Students are required to attend school in appropriate dress that meets health and safety standards and does not interfere with their or other's education. We also understand and respect the legitimate expression of speech as upheld by the courts. This policy is intended to balance a student's constitutional free speech with the District's obligation to provide for a safe and healthy learning environment free of substantial disruption. It is written as Shaker Junior High's application of Board of Education policy #5311.5.

Students often dress as they see others dress on television or at the mall. Being fashionable, however, is not always the same as being appropriate for school. Young adolescents often do not see how their appearance is perceived by their peers and by adults.

We emphasize to all students that school is a place where students are engaged in the **business of learning** and that they need to dress in a manner that promotes self-respect and the respect of others. Most students dress appropriately on a daily basis; some need regular reminders.

Students are expected to adhere to the following:

- Students should be covered from shoulders to mid-thigh, except for arms (no bare midriffs showing)
- shorts and skirts have to be a mid-thigh length or longer
- no undergarments, such as boxer shorts or bra straps, should be visible: clothes that reveal undergarments should not be worn
- thin spaghetti strapped tops and tank tops are considered undergarments and should be covered
- headwear (except for those of a religious or cultural nature) and sunglasses are not to be worn in the building
- jackets and coats meant for outdoors should not be worn in school

The wearing of attire bearing an expression (phrase, word or words) or insignia (picture, symbol, patch or pin) that is in any of the following categories is forbidden:

- is obscene or libelous, contains an objectionable message, is graphic, or has language including insults, whether directed to themselves or others
- advocates prejudice towards race, color, religion, culture, national origin, disability or any protected group
- is sexually harassing, or suggestive or contains sexual references
- displays or advocates the use of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances
- advocates violence or threatening behavior by others
- displays known gang colors or identifications

Certain categories of clothing have been held to be impermissible by the Commissioner of Education on the basis of factors other than appropriateness of style, fashion or taste. These categories are those constituting:

- Health and safety to the student and others (e.g., long haired sweaters worn near open flames and heating elements, or loose parts of clothing worn near machinery).
- Possibility of damage to school property (e.g., metal cleats or shoes, long chains or straps, or clothing containing hardware which may scratch or gouge furniture).
- Indecent or obscene
- Distraction so as to interfere with the learning and teaching process (e.g., noise producing adornment or appearance or clothing that is distracting to other students or the educational environment).

Classroom teachers have an educational obligation to encourage neat, clean and appropriate dress. Students shall be asked to wear appropriate protective gear in certain classes (i.e., family and consumer sciences, technology education, science, art and physical education).

Students will be asked to change their appearance to conform to these building-wide expectations; students also may be excluded from field trips, regular classroom attendance and extracurricular activities and programs due to inappropriate dress or appearance as determined by school administrators. If necessary, progressive consequences will be assigned for repeated violations.

We want to impress upon our children what constitutes appropriate clothing for a school environment, and we ask for your help. A concerted message from home and school will be most effective. Please be sure to check your child's clothing before he/she leaves for school in the morning.

Thank you in advance for your support and assistance.