The primary goal of Durham Public Schools is to provide a safe learning environment where all students are able to achieve at their highest potential. The Durham Public Schools student dress code supports equitable educational access and is written in a manner that does not reinforce stereotypes and that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, physical/mental ability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

The student dress code supports the Board's goal of inspiring students to learn. The responsibility for the dress and grooming of a student rest primarily with the student and the student's parents or guardians. Generally, dress and grooming standards as determined by the student and the student's parent or guardian will be deemed acceptable. Our expectation is that parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring student compliance with the school's dress code, and students are responsible for knowing the student dress code and for complying during school hours and school activities.

In support of these goals and expectations the Board establishes a dress code for students.

A. Allowable Dress & Grooming
1. Students must wear clothing including dresses/jumpsuits, or both a shirt or top with bottoms, including shorts, pants or a skirt, or the equivalent and shoes.
2. Clothing must have fabric in the front, back, and on the sides.
3. Clothing must cover undergarments; underwear waistbands and bra straps are not required to be covered and are excluded.
4. Fabric covering all private parts of the body must be opaque and cannot be see-through or mesh or transparent. Private parts include the breasts, genitals and buttocks.
5. Fitted pants, including leggings, yoga pants, and "skinny jeans"
6. Sweatpants, pajama/lounge pants midriff-baring shirts (must be able to cover private areas when arms are raised), ripped jeans as long as any portion of undergarments covering private parts are not visible.
7. Tank tops, including spaghetti straps, halter tops, and strapless tops.
8. Religious headwear is expressly allowed to cover the head and face.
9. Clothing must be suitable for all scheduled classroom activities including physical education, science labs, wood shop, and other activities where unique hazards may exist.
    a. Courses requiring attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, CTE courses, and job readiness may include assignment-specific dress, but should not focus on covering bodies in a particular manner or promoting culturally specific attire.
10. Specialized courses may require specialized attire.
    a. School-sanctioned uniforms and costumes approved by the principal for athletic, choral, band or dramatic performances are allowed.
11. Students may dress and style their hair for school in a manner that expresses their individuality and culture, including, for example, locs, braids, geles
    a. Certain programs may have more restrictive requirements for hairstyles,

including NCHSAA and ROTC programs, which require signatures of students and parents consenting to these restrictions on grooming and dress.

B. Prohibitions

Students are prohibited from wearing clothing, jewelry, book bags, or other articles of personal appearance which:

1. depict profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, or violence;
2. promote use or abuse of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol;
3. endangers or creates a threat to the health or safety of the student or others;
4. are prohibited under the Gangs and Gang Activities in Policy 4301(III-7) and Gang-Related Activity, Policy 4328;
5. are reasonably likely to create a substantial and material disruption to the educational process or to the operation of the school, including but not limited to items that are reasonably expected to intimidate other students on the basis of race (for example the Confederate battle flag, swastika, and Ku Klux Klan or KKK), color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, or religious affiliation.

The principal may make reasonable accommodations for religious, cultural, educational, or medical reasons so long as the clothing in question is not prohibited under Section B1-5) of this policy.

When a school staff member or school administrator discusses a dress or grooming violation with a student, it is recommended that another adult should be present and at least one of the two adults should be the same sex or gender, as appropriate, as the student. Unless there is an immediate concern, a student should not be spoken to about a dress code violation in front of other students.

Before receiving disciplinary consequences, a student who is not in compliance with this policy will be given a reasonable period of time to make adjustments so that the student will be in compliance. Disciplinary consequences for a student who fails to comply after being offered this opportunity shall be consistent with Level I of policy 4301, Code of Student Conduct.

To equitably enforce the district dress code, all teachers, administrators, and staff must be notified of and provided training on equitably and properly implementing the policy as well as the expectations of the board at the beginning of the school year. A refresher may be offered in the spring or at other times as deemed necessary or prudent by the principal. The refresher should be in regard to the purpose and spirit of the dress code, and how to enforce it without shaming students or disproportionately impacting certain student groups. Staff should be guided by the dress code policy and follow the letter and spirit of the district dress code.

Principals should not refer violations of this policy to law enforcement.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -390.2

Cross References: Code of Student Conduct (policy 4301), Disruptive Behavior (policy 4315), Gang-Related Activity (policy 4328)

Acknowledgement: Oregon NOW Model Student Dress Code creators developed the language that inspires this current dress code.

Adopted: