

Policy Title: Dress Standards & Colour Codes in Public Schools
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Legislation: Nil

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Each ACT Public School in conjunction with their school board will develop and implement a school *Dress Standard and Colour Code* policy. Schools will expect students to abide by a dress standard while attending school or official school activities. This dress standard may include colour code or school uniform.

2. RATIONALE

- 2.1 This policy requires schools to review, document and adhere to school dress standards, colour code or authorised school uniform requirements in consultation with their school board and develop strategies for the wearing of a school dress standard, colour code, or school uniforms. School dress standards, colour codes or uniforms should reflect school community standards and be consistent with occupational health and safety, anti-discrimination, equal opportunity legislation and the Education and Training Directorate's *Sun Protection* policy.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Dress standard

A dress standard is a detailed written statement of the expectations that a school board holds regarding student appearance. A dress standard may require students to wear a school uniform and may define specifications for garment design and or colour. Alternatively, a dress standard may merely set out broad guidelines as to the appearance of students.

3.2 Colour code

School colour codes are the colours chosen by a school board to represent the school on uniforms or dress standards and other items of identification. In an effort to further establish identity and promote a standard, schools may have two colours or more.

3.3 School uniform

A school uniform consists of a limited range of clothing. It identifies students as belonging to a particular school.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Schools expect students to abide by their dress standard which may include colour code or uniform during school hours, while travelling to and from school and when engaged in school activities out of the school. A student's inability to comply however should not interfere or interrupt student learning.

4.2 In developing a *Student Dress Standard and Colour Code* policy the principal and school board must:

- Consult with parents and carers of students enrolled at the school, the school community, staff and students.
- Have a trial period for displaying items of dress requirements for feedback;
- Consider occupational health and safety, anti-discrimination, opportunity legislation and the Education and Training Directorate's *Sun Protection* policy;
- Incorporate issues of availability, affordability and functionality of items of clothing;
- Consider maturity of students, gender, disability, religious and cultural beliefs, socio-economic circumstances and a student's sense of individuality and self-esteem in personal appearance;
- Develop a process for managing special circumstances of particular students or exemption processes,
- Develop a system that provides the opportunity to wear relevant items of dress standard, colour code or uniform from a bank of items held at the school such as a uniform pool
- Develop and document strategies and sanctions for managing students not complying with dress standards and colour code requirements; and
- Enforce aspects of student dress standard, colour codes or uniform related to safety such as:
 - safe footwear
 - hats and swim shirts as required by the Education and Training Directorate's *Sun Protection* policy
- Consider the cost associated with having a colour code or uniform including the accessibility, availability and appropriate retailer.

4.3 Parents must be informed in writing of the school's *Dress Standard and Colour Code* policy and are asked at the time of enrolment to take responsibility for outfitting their children according to the requirements. Enrolment is not conditional upon agreement. Informing parents may also be achieved by publishing the guidelines in the school handbook and school newsletters. Parents should also be informed that a full copy of the school's *Dress Standard and Colour Code* policy is available for inspection at the school.

4.4 Everyone has a role in setting the standards for the school. Teachers and other school staff model appropriate standards for students. They should dress in a professional manner at all times.

4.5 Students should not be disadvantaged where required dress standard, colour code or uniform items are not available because of circumstances beyond their control.

5. Non compliance and resolving conflict

5.1 All students are expected to meet dress standards, colour code or uniform unless an exemption has been granted.

5.2 A school must include in their policy a range of strategies that deal with non compliance or failure of a student to uphold the required dress standards. These strategies may include:

- the offer of appropriate item/s from a bank of clothing/uniforms held at the school,
- preventing the student from attending any activity in which the student would have been representing the school, and
- preventing the student from attending or participating in any school activity which, in the opinion of the Principal, is not part of the educational program
- informing student's parents or carers of incident and discuss further with parents or carers, representatives of school and student to prevent recurrence, or
- implementing a process of conflict resolution or mediation if a student persistently wears inappropriate dress after discussions have been held with parents or carers.
- Preventing participation in specific activities where dress standards, colour code or school uniform are key requirements.

5.3 Strategies for non-compliance are not to include:

- suspension for not complying with colour code, uniform or dress standards,
- any sanction that damages their academic or external career prospects such as negative mentions in references or school reports,
- the prevention from continued participation in essential curriculum activities, except where necessary for reasons of safety (in which case, alternative educational activities are provided), and
- any sanction where required uniform or dress code items are not available because of circumstances beyond their control.

5.4 The preferred approach to ensuring students abide by dress standards, colour code or uniform is the positive reinforcement and encouragement of responsible behaviour.

6. Special considerations

6.1 In resolving matters of student dress standards, colour code or uniforms the principal must consider:

- mobile families requiring sufficient time to purchase items of dress;
- the unavailability of an item,
- a matter relating to the student's health,
- economic hardship requiring special arrangements, or an extended period of time to purchase new items of dress;
- conscientious objections, for example objections raised on any reasonable religious or cultural grounds, and
- an exemption from wearing the dress requirements granted by the principal.

POLICY OWNER

Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education & Student Support

RELATED POLICIES

Sun Protection 2006

Providing Safe Schools P-12 2007

Teachers' Code of Professional Practice 2006