



POLICY 5.182

4F I recommend the Board approve adoption of the proposed revised Policy 5.182, entitled "Student Dress Codes and Uniforms."

[Contact: Cheryl Alligood, PX46888 and Dr. Joseph Lee, PX48813.]

Development

CONSENT ITEM

- The Board approved development of this revised Policy at the development reading on June 19, 2013.
- This revised policy provides for:
 - A basic dress code, the District-Wide Student Dress Code, which is applicable in District schools at all times. This code provides for a minimal dress code which indicates attire that would be unacceptable for District students. (See Sec. 3c and Sec.4A.)
 - Two (2) dress codes that could be considered by a District school for adoption of an enhanced dress code: School Specific Dress Code *and* Higher Standard Dress Code.
 - The School Specific (Standard) Dress Code is an expansion of the above basic dress code, so it is not a uniform dress code. It must be age and development appropriate, identifying attire that is prohibited. It may be implemented by a Principal after input from the School Advisory Council (SAC), and in collaboration with the PTA/PTO/PTSA. (See Sec. 4B.)
 - The Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code provides for a school to implement a school uniform, while adhering to the basic District-Wide Dress Code. Guidelines are provided for a school to implement a uniform dress code, by establishing the role of the SAC to determine if there is broad-based school support for uniforms; creating a uniform committee to select the uniforms and a uniform company; providing the uniform to become effective the school year following adoption; and establishing an evaluation process for the dress code. (See Sec. 4C [higher Standard (uniform) Dress Code] and Sec. 5 [Guidelines for Implementing a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code].)
- Exemptions (religious freedom, medical condition, financial hardship, accommodation for free speech and specific attire or uniforms) are provided

- to the Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code. (See Sec. 5G [Exemptions to Higher Standard Dress Code].)
- Procedures are outlined for parents/guardians to make exemption requests (See Sec. 6 [Exemption Requests]; and to appeal denial of exemptions See Sec. 7 [Appeal of Denial of Exemption].)
 - Each principal and School Advisory Council are required to develop procedures and criteria to offer assistance to students having difficulty complying with the uniform dress code due to financial hardship. Schools are prohibited from disclosing the identity of the family or student requiring such assistance. (See Sec. 8 [Clothing Assistance].)
 - New or transfer students are provided five (5) days to comply with a uniform dress code, unless the school provides the clothing.

POLICY 5.182

STUDENT DRESS CODES AND UNIFORMS

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3 1. **Purpose**

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5 Section 1001.43(1)(b), Fla. Stat., authorizes the Board to require uniforms to be
6 worn by the student body or impose other dress-related requirements if the Board
7 finds that these requirements are necessary for the safety or welfare of the student
8 body or school personnel.

9
10 The Board recognizes that individual students have a right to free expression and
11 that right must be balanced with the Board's responsibility to provide classrooms
12 and campuses which are safe, secure, and orderly, and an educational
13 environment which is supportive of the school system's academic goals and
14 educational responsibilities. In support of these goals and expectations, the
15 Board establishes the following dress codes for District students.

16 2. **Scope**

17 This policy applies to all students and schools in the Palm Beach County School
18 District (District).

19 3. **Definitions**

20 i. Attire means clothing, headwear, jewelry, book bags, accessories or other
21 articles of personal appearance.

22 ii. Dress Code means a set of parameters that describes acceptable and
23 unacceptable student apparel to ensure the health and safety of all students
24 and creates a positive learning environment; and refers to the District-wide
25 and/or School Specific Dress Codes.

26 iii. District-Wide Student Dress Code means a set of parameters as determined
27 by the School Board, that describes acceptable and unacceptable apparel to

28 ensure the health and safety of all students and creates a positive learning
29 environment.

30 iv. School Specific (Standard) Dress Code means a set of parameters
31 determined by the immediate school site that describes acceptable and
32 unacceptable student apparel and appearance, including but not limited to,
33 clothing, makeup, tattoos, and jewelry.

34 v. Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code means distinctive clothing styles
35 and/or specific colors worn by students as a means of identifying them as
36 members of a school community and determined by the local school site.
37 Included in the definition of a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code is the
38 selective dress or standards of a District academy, magnet, or choice
39 program.

40 **4. Policy Statement**

41 It is a fundamental function of the District to create and maintain a positive
42 educational environment by devoting attention to learning, increasing school safety,
43 encouraging good behavior and discipline, and minimizing disruptions and
44 distractions. The Board believes that appropriate attire and grooming contribute to
45 a productive and effective learning environment. Thus, all students are expected
46 to be groomed and dressed appropriately for age, grade level, school, and school
47 activities.

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49 Student attire or grooming that substantially or potentially disrupts the educational
50 environment or school program creates a distraction which interferes with the
51 educational process or classroom activity, or presents a health or safety hazard to
52 the students or school community is not permitted. The determination of what
53 constitutes a safety or health hazard, or what constitutes a distraction of students
54 from a classroom activity, or what constitutes a disruption of a school program or
55 excessive maintenance of school property shall be made by the principal or
56 designee. The principal or designee shall have final authority to decide if a
57 student's attire complies with a dress code or uniform dress code, and shall use

58 reasonable discretion in interpreting and implementing the provisions of this policy.
59 The dress and uniform codes as described below shall be applicable for the
60 District.

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62 All documents, forms and communications that are provided to parents, must be
63 translated for parents who speak a language identified as a Major Language in the
64 District. Furthermore, parents who speak languages other than the identified
65 Major Languages, written translations or oral interpretation will be provided upon
66 parents' request, or if the need for translation or interpretation becomes apparent.

67 a. **District-Wide Student Dress Code.** To help create the best learning
68 environment for District students, the District-Wide Dress Code must be
69 observed in all District schools. This code provides a minimal district-wide
70 dress code which should apply even if a school implements a School Specific
71 (Standard) School Dress Code or Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code as
72 provided in this policy. Specifically, the following attire is unacceptable in
73 District schools:

- 74 i. Attire with language or images that are crude, vulgar, profane,
75 lewd/obscene, sexually explicit, or sexually suggestive.
- 76 ii. Attire with symbols, mottoes, words or acronyms that promotes illegal or
77 violent conduct, such as gang symbols, the unlawful use of weapons,
78 drugs, alcohol, tobacco or drug paraphernalia, or clothing that contains
79 threats.
- 80 iii. Attire associated with discrimination on the basis of age, color, handicap,
81 national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion, or sex.
- 82 iv. Clothing traditionally designed as undergarments, such as boxer shorts or
83 sleepwear, may not be worn as outer garments.
- 84 v. Clothing that is sexually suggestive or revealing (examples include, but is
85 not limited to, clothing which exposes the midriff, exposes one's
86 undergarments, have plunging necklines, muscle tops, backless
87 clothing, and are constructed of see-through materials.

- 88 vi. Attire that may be used as a weapon, including but not limited to, steel
89 toed shoes; large, long or heavy waist or other chains; studded or
90 chained accessories; items with spikes; and other items deemed
91 inappropriate by an individual school site.
- 92 vii. Articles of clothing that cause excessive maintenance problems for school
93 property, such as, shoe cleats that scratch floors or tear rugs,
94 trousers with metal rivets that scratch furniture, etc.
- 95 viii. Clothing which, because of fit, design, color, texture, inadequate
96 coverage, or some other factor, creates classroom or school disorder or
97 distract the attention of another student or students in any class in
98 session from the lesson being presented or from any other assigned
99 school activity, or which creates a safety or health hazard for any student
100 in the school.
- 101 ix. Jewelry worn in a manner that presents a safety health hazard or causes
102 a major disruption to the educational process. Examples may be chains
103 hanging from the belt, pocket or attached to the wallet.
- 104 x. Footwear which does not provide adequate protection or hygienic
105 measures.
- 106 xi. A student who fails to maintain personal cleanliness, grooming, or
107 neatness of dress to the extent that presence in the classroom creates
108 classroom or school disorder or distracts the attention of others from
109 assigned classroom activity will be required to maintain a level of
110 personal cleanliness, grooming, or neatness of dress that eliminates the
111 disorder or the distraction of other students in the classroom.
- 112 b. **School Specific Dress Code.** A principal, with input from the School
113 Advisory Council (SAC), and in collaboration with PTA/PTO/PTSA may
114 expand upon the above District-wide Dress Code and implement a gender
115 neutral school dress code and appearance policy, provided such policy
116 incorporates the provisions of the above District-wide Dress Code as a
117 minimum standard and is consistent with the provisions of this policy. When

118 adopting an School Specific (Standard) Dress Code, the school must abide by
119 the following:

120 i. The School Specific (Standard) Dress Code must be specific in nature,
121 carefully identifying the attire that is prohibited at that school; must be age
122 and development appropriate; and must be applied consistently to all
123 students.

124 ii. The school must notify parents and students at the beginning of the year
125 of the details of the School Specific (Standard) Dress Code. The
126 notification can take place in all or any of the following forms with the
127 goal of informing students and parents: school newsletter, sending
128 home letter with students; electronic methods – website, email and
129 general posting. The details of the School Specific (Standard) Dress
130 Code should be updated throughout the year if new and/or unacceptable
131 trends develop.

132 iii. Violation of this policy shall not result in loss of academic instructional
133 time or a lower academic grade.

134 iv. Schools must establish an exception to the dress code for sincerely held
135 religious beliefs or a documented disability. For instance, if a school
136 establishes a ban on hats and headwear, an exception must be provided
137 for students who cover their heads as expression of a sincerely held
138 religious belief.

139 c. **Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code.** In the District, there are
140 communities that support a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code.
141 Research demonstrates that uniform dress codes decrease distractions,
142 support higher academic achievement, help students resist peer pressure,
143 decrease violence and theft in the school environment, and facilitates a safe
144 learning environment. Uniform dress codes encourage and teach students
145 the appropriate attire for various settings, including the school environment
146 and prepare students for future roles in the workplace. They also ensure staff
147 may easily identify their students to better secure the school campus.

148
149 The Board allows the opportunity for individual schools to implement a Higher
150 Standard (Uniform) Dress Code consistent with the guidelines as provided in
151 this policy. If the Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code is implemented in a
152 school, the clothing requirements in the established Higher Standard (Uniform)
153 Dress Code are in addition to the requirements of the District-wide Dress
154 Code. The school's selected uniforms shall comply in all respects with the
155 other provisions of this policy concerning appropriate attire.

156 5. **Guidelines for Implementing a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code**

157 Schools shall be eligible to participate in a mandatory higher standard (uniform)
158 dress code, if the following conditions are met:

159 a. Role of School Advisory Council. The School Advisory Council (SAC) shall
160 determine if there is broad-based support in the school community, including
161 parents, students, staff, and others for the school's adoption of a Higher
162 Standard (Uniform) Dress Code. If a decision is made to move forward with a
163 Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code, the SAC, with the principal's
164 assistance, will have a vote taken during the spring of any given year. Voting
165 shall occur on a specific, advertised date(s) to be effective the following school
166 year.

167 i. Ballots must be made available to 100% of the parents or guardians of
168 students who will be subject to the proposed Higher Standard (Uniform)
169 Dress Code. At least fifty-one (51) percent of the parents in that school,
170 who vote, must vote in favor of establishing a uniform dress code. This
171 vote will stand for a minimum of three school years, at which time the
172 SAC may determine if a subject vote is warranted.

173 ii. New schools shall conduct an initial vote in the spring of their opening
174 year, and thereafter, conduct votes according to this policy and its related
175 administrative procedures.

- 176 iii. If a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code is adopted for the school, the
177 SAC shall make provisions for those students who cannot comply with the
178 uniform dress.
- 179 b. Establishment of Uniform Committee. If the school decides to adopt a Higher
180 Standard (Uniform) Dress Code each principal will appoint a uniform
181 committee. The committee should adequately reflect all segments of the
182 school community and consist of parents, staff, students, and members of the
183 SAC. The Uniform Committee shall:
- 184 i. determine the design and select the uniform(s) for the school, and such
185 design and selection shall comply in all respects with the provisions of
186 this policy concerning appropriate attire.
- 187 ii. not select a uniform company as an “official uniform company” for the
188 school, but can identify a uniform company as a “preferred” option.
189 However, parents must be advised that the selected uniform or a generic
190 option can be purchased from a variety of sources, such as other uniform
191 companies, department stores, catalogs, etc.; and
- 192 iii. adhere to any guidelines as provided in the administrative procedures to
193 this policy.
- 194 c. Effective Date of a New Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code. A Higher
195 Standard (Uniform) Dress Code policy shall be effective at the start of the
196 school year following its adoption.
- 197 d. Notification to Parents/Guardians. At least two (2) months before a Higher
198 Standard (Uniform) Dress Code is implemented, the principal or designee
199 shall notify parents/guardians of the dress code. Such notification shall also
200 inform parents/guardians of their right to have their child exempted from
201 complying with the dress code by filing a written request for exemption with the
202 principal.
- 203 e. Evaluation of Uniform Dress Code. All schools shall evaluate the
204 effectiveness of their Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code each year for the
205 first three years of the program. The content and design of the evaluation

206 instrument will be coordinated by the Principals Division Dress Code
207 Committee and will be the same instrument for all schools requiring a Higher
208 Standard (Uniform) Dress Code. Based upon the results of the evaluation,
209 the SAC, in collaboration with the PTA/PTO/PTSA, shall consider either the
210 continuation of the school's Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code or a
211 change to a different uniform dress code during the third year of the
212 implemented Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code. Any changes to the
213 Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code should be communicated to the
214 students, parents, and the school community through school-based rules,
215 student handbooks, school newsletters, the school's website, and/or other
216 means as determined by the principal.

217 f. Compliance Measures. A school with a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress
218 Code shall develop incentives and positive reinforcement measures to
219 encourage full compliance with the Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code.
220 Each school should strive to achieve full compliance through use of incentives
221 and positive reinforcement measures.

222 g. Exemptions to Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code. Exemptions to the
223 Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code may be granted by the Principal or
224 designee subject to the following criteria:

225 i. Religious Freedom. The wearing of clothing in compliance with the
226 uniform dress violates a student's sincerely held religious belief or the
227 student's religious belief require wearing attire that does not conform to
228 the dress code; provided that, the student and parent have submitted a
229 request for exemption in accordance with this policy.

230 ii. Medical Condition or Physical Disability. A medical condition or physical
231 disability issue documented by a medical professional or through an IEP
232 which would preclude the student from being able to wear regular clothes
233 to school for a specified period of time.

234 iii. Financial Hardship. A student whose parent/guardian for a period of
235 time meets one of the following criteria and can document:

- 236 (a) Homelessness:
237 (b) Student receives free and/or reduced meals;
238 (c) Head of the family is unemployed or on disability; OR
239 (d) Family receives general public assistance or some other form of
240 documented financial aid; AND
241 (e) The school has been unable to provide the student with clothing to
242 comply with the uniform dress code.
- 243 h. Accommodation of Free Speech. A student wears a button, armband, or
244 other accouterment to exercise the right of free speech guaranteed by the
245 United States and Florida Constitutions, unless the button, armband, or other
246 accouterment signifies or is related to gangs, gang membership, or gang
247 activity, or would otherwise violate this policy.
- 248 i. Specific Attire or Uniforms - A student wears a uniform of a nationally
249 recognized youth organization, such as the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, on
250 regular meeting days; or a student wears a costume or special clothing
251 necessary for a school play or other school-sponsored activity as permitted by
252 the principal.

253 6. **Exemption Requests**

- 254 A parent or guardian may request an exemption of his or her child (children) from
255 the Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code by following the provisions as provided
256 below.
- 257 a. Request for Exemption. A request shall be made by mail or in person by the
258 parents or guardians for an Application for Exemption from the Higher
259 Standard (Uniform) Dress Code Program ("Application"). The Application shall
260 be completed in full and submitted to the principal or designee. The student
261 shall comply with the Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code until such time as
262 the principal or designee meets with the parent or guardian and grants an
263 exemption. The meeting shall be held within two (2) school days after receipt
264 of the Application.

- 265 b. Conference with Parents/Guardians. The principal or designee shall discuss
266 with the parents/guardians the Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code and the
267 nature of the parents'/guardians' objections to the code. The purposes of this
268 meeting shall include: (i) ensuring that the parents/guardians understand the
269 reasons for, and goals of the Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code; (ii)
270 verifying the accuracy of the information on the Application; and (iii) preventing
271 fraud or misrepresentation.
- 272 c. Waiver. If a student is granted a waiver, the student is released from the
273 uniform requirement, but remains subject to this policy and the District-wide
274 Dress Code.

275 7. **Appeal of Denial of Exemption**

276 Any student or parent/guardian who believes that the principal or designee has not
277 reasonably accommodated his or her religious beliefs, medical condition,
278 physical disability, or free speech may submit a written appeal to the District Dress
279 Code Committee. The Dress Code Committee shall consist of area
280 superintendents of the School District and may request such additional information
281 from the school, the student, and/or the parents/guardians as it deems necessary.
282 The committee shall issue a written decision on the appeal within twenty-one (21)
283 days.

284 8. **Clothing Assistance**

285 It is a policy of the Board that no student will be denied attendance at school or
286 otherwise denied an education for failing to wear clothing that complies with the
287 District-wide, a School Specific (Standard), or a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress
288 Code, whichever is applicable, if such failure is due to financial hardship. Each
289 principal and SAC shall develop procedures and criteria to offer assistance to
290 students who would have or are having difficulty complying with their school's
291 Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code due to financial hardships. Parents may
292 request such assistance from the principal or designee. The identity of the family
293 or child shall not be disclosed.

294

295 9. **Dress for Other Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities**

296 Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the regulation of dress, grooming, and
297 appearance of students participating in co-curricular and extracurricular school
298 activities such as vocational education, JROTC, band, cheerleading, basketball,
299 football, or the like, by the principal or designee.

300 10. **New and Transfer Students**

301 Students entering the Palm Beach County Public School System for the first time
302 during the school year shall be granted a grace period up to five (5) days before
303 being required to comply with a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code, unless the
304 school provides the student(s) with clothing to comply with the Higher Standard
305 (Uniform Dress Code).

306 11. **Exceptions for Designated Days or Events**

307 Each principal may periodically designate specific days or events (i.e.,
308 recognition day, school picnic, field day, or spirit week) during which deviations
309 from an approved Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code will be permitted,
310 provided the principal determines that such exceptions will facilitate the event,
311 promote school spirit, or otherwise serve an educational interest.

312 12. **Intervention and Disciplinary Matters**

313 Corrective Strategies. Consequences may only be initiated after all other means
314 to secure support and cooperation of the parent/guardian has been exhausted.
315 Prior to initiating any disciplinary action against a student who is not in compliance
316 with a Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code, or who has not requested an
317 exemption from the Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Code, a conference will be
318 requested by the principal or designee with the parent/guardian to solicit
319 cooperation and support.

320 13. **Responsibility**

321 The chief academic officer or designee is responsible for monitoring compliance
322 with this policy and for evaluating its effectiveness.

323 ~~The School Board of Palm Beach County is legally and ethically responsible for the~~

324 ~~establishment of classroom and campus environments that are conducive to a safe,~~
325 ~~orderly, and productive educational program. The health, safety, and welfare of each~~
326 ~~student can be enhanced through the implementation of dress standards for students.~~
327 ~~All schools shall develop gender neutral dress codes or uniform guidelines.~~
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330 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Fla. Stat. §§ 1001.41; 1001.42(26); ~~230.23(17);~~
331 ~~230.23005~~

332 LAWS IMPLEMENTED: Fla. Stat. §§ 1001.43(1)(b); 1006.07(2)(d)
333 ~~230.23(6)(c)(d); 230.33(8); 232.25~~

334 HISTORY: 7/29/98; __/__/13

Legal Signoff:

The Legal Department has reviewed proposed Policy 5.182 and finds it legally sufficient for development by the Board.



Attorney



Date