

I. Introduction and Statement of Policy

All staff of the Martin County Schools System serve as role models for the students with whom they work. The board expects all employees to dress professionally and appropriately relative to their specific job duties and responsibilities and in a manner that clearly distinguishes them from students. The overriding principle is that all employees, while on duty, are representatives of the Martin County Schools System. This includes when employees represent Martin County Schools at workshops, conferences, and other job-related functions.

Supervisors and school-level administrators are authorized to interpret and enforce this policy. Any employee in violation of this policy may be asked by his or her supervisor to go home and change clothes and/or refrain from wearing such clothing in the future. Repeated problems with an employee's inappropriate dress or appearance may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

II. Reasonable Accommodation

A. Reasonable accommodations shall be made by the appropriate supervisor for those employees who, because of a sincerely held religious belief, cultural heritage, or medical reason request a waiver of a particular part of this policy for dress or appearance.

B. It is the intent of the Board that the dress code standards will apply to all instructional and all extracurricular settings including athletic contests. Reasonable modifications to this policy may be made by the appropriate supervisor to accommodate staff members who are engaged in specialized duties such as physical education classes, career-technical labs, field trips, athletic team practices, or teacher workdays, etc.

III. Uniforms

The wearing of uniforms may be required as a condition of employment for particular positions. Uniforms, if required, shall be provided for employees in the following areas: Child Nutrition, Maintenance, Custodial Services, and Transportation Support. That being said, employees in these departments should wear uniforms, including footwear and headwear, in an appropriate and professional manner.

IV. Instructional Personnel

Instructional personnel are considered professional employees and should dress in a manner appropriate to the standards of their profession in all administrative and classroom situations. To this end, instructional personnel should appear neat, clean, and appropriately dressed at all times for a business/professional environment. Any departure from this standard should be very infrequent, be relative to a specific activity in which the employee is engaged, and must be approved by the employee's principal or supervisor.

V. Professional Office Personnel

The dress and appearance of classified office personnel, especially those positions that involve frequent contact with the public, should demonstrate neatness and professionalism appropriate to the office environment.

VI. Administrators

Administrators are expected to dress in a professional, business-casual style.

VII. Examples of Inappropriate Dress Articles or Styles

Some certain styles and articles of clothing while perhaps acceptable for evening, weekend, or leisure activities, are inappropriate for a school environment and are not indicative of professional school employees. Examples of these styles or articles include:

- A. T-shirts, denim jeans, and other non-professional garments should not be worn by instructional staff.
- B. Jewelry affixed to an employee's nose, tongue, cheek, lip, or eyebrow.
- C. Clothing that is provocative, revealing, indecent, vulgar, or obscene.
 1. Skirts and dresses may be no higher than three (3) inches above the knee.
 2. Low necklines, see-through, bare midriffs, tank tops, spaghetti straps, and overly tight or clingy clothing.
 3. Tights and leggings may only be worn under appropriate-length skirts, dresses or long tunics.
- D. Clothing that promotes or has messages pertaining to alcohol, tobacco, or any controlled substances.
- E. Clothing that includes words or images of profanity, nudity, depicts gangs or violence or is sexual in nature.
- F. Clothing that depicts messages or symbols that may be deemed offensive towards cultural, ethnic, or racial groups.
- G. Undergarments worn as outer garments and loungewear such as yoga pants or "jeggings".
- H. Flip-flops and beach footwear.
- I. Hats, sweatbands, bandanas, or sunglasses worn inside school building.

Legal Reference(s): G.S. 115C-36, -47, -288, -308

Adopted: April 5, 2005

Revised: March 4, 2019