

**GBRL-R Employee Dress Code**

2/11/19

**RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:**

The Cobb County School District (District) recognizes that professional attire helps set the tone of an educational system. Our professional appearance helps reflect the finest traditions of the teaching profession by establishing a sense of trust and confidence within our community. Our professional appearance should be one that enhances our primary goal of student learning and achievement. Employees' attire should at all times be distinguishable from students' attire.

**RULE:**

All employees should exhibit a professional appearance in a manner and style in accordance with the following guidelines set forth by the District.

**A. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:**

Employees of the District shall:

1. Maintain a level of personal hygiene necessary to:
  - a. Ensure an appropriate educational environment and to refrain from any mode of dress which is not exemplary for students.
  - b. Ensure a healthy school or work environment.
2. Adhere to administrative regulations related to appropriate dress/equipment for safety purposes.
3. Observe a standard of grooming and appearance consistent with the level of formality of the school or work situation.

**B. MINIMUM STANDARDS:**

The minimum standards of professional appearance for employees shall be as follows:

1. During the work day and anytime employees attend work-related activities, employees shall exhibit a professional appearance. Examples of clothing fostering a professional appearance include: collared shirts; dress slacks; dress coordinates, suits, dresses, ties and sports coats. Exceptions would include those positions which have specified separate dress expectations, such as School Food Service, Transportation, and Maintenance.
  - a. Body alteration or modification is prohibited if it is intentional and results in a visible, physical effect that detracts from a professional image. Tattoos and brands anywhere on the body that are obscene, advocate sexual, racial, ethnic or religious discrimination or that are of a nature that tends to bring discredit to the District are prohibited. Prohibited alterations, modifications, tattoos or brands must be covered with articles of clothing, or other appropriate material if the tattoo is small, so they are not visible to students or other employees.
  - b. Employees are prohibited from attaching, affixing or displaying objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to or through the nose, tongue or any exposed body part except for earrings worn only on the ear(s).
2. Some work sites and schools have certain designated days throughout the year commonly referred to as "Casual Friday" or "Spirit Day". Clothing considered acceptable for these designated days includes the following: jeans; wind suits; non-collared shirts with the district/school logo or school colors; high school or college spirit wear; athletic shoes; other items deemed appropriate by the local school administration. Clothing considered acceptable for those locations which recognize "Spirit Day" include those items which are appropriate for "Casual Friday" if that dress supports the theme of the specific spirit day as deemed appropriate by the local school administration.

3. Some school-sponsored activities, such as laboratory experiences and field trips, necessitate dress other than that appropriate for a normal workday. Employees who have questions regarding acceptable dress for these activities should consult their supervisor or local administrator.
4. Some job assignments, such as working with students who have disabilities in the severe and profound range who lack the ability to care for themselves, require interactions with students that warrant dress different than that appropriate for a normal work assignment. Employees who have questions regarding acceptable dress resulting from their job assignment should consult their supervisors or local administrators.
5. The minimum standards of employees regarding dress and grooming will exceed those standards required of students in Administrative Rule JCDB-R (Student Dress Code).

**C. ENFORCEMENT OF THE STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE:**

**1. Schools:**

The principal shall be responsible for enforcing the standards of professional appearance based on his/her evaluation of the impact an individual's appearance has upon the school climate, educational process, or the school's image in the community. The principal shall be the final judge as to the appropriateness of wearing apparel.

**2. Work Sites Other Than Local Schools:**

The work site supervisor shall be responsible for enforcing the standards of professional appearance based on his/her evaluation of the impact an individual's appearance has upon the site's climate, work process, or the site's image in the District and/or community. The supervisor shall be the final judge as to the appropriateness of wearing apparel.

**D. CULTURALLY OR ETHNICALLY-BASED ATTIRE:**

The District values the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of its employee base and demonstrates sensitivity to it by establishing as the District's goal that employees of all backgrounds feel welcome.

1. Supervisors and principals are authorized to approve, on a case-by-case basis, exceptions to the code for employees who want to occasionally wear culturally or ethnically-based clothing. Exceptions must be requested and granted prior to the employee's wearing the clothing to their work site. If a supervisor or principal is approached by an employee requesting permission to wear cultural or ethnic-based clothing, he/she should observe the following guidelines:
  - a. Ask the employee to put his/her request in writing to you, specifying what he/she wants to wear, why and when he/she wants to wear it.
  - b. If the request is appropriate, will not present a health or safety hazard and will maintain the professional image of the school or work site, it should be approved.
    - (1) Approval should be documented in writing to the employee.
    - (2) A copy of the written approval should be retained in local/site files.
  - c. If the supervisor/principal believes the request should be denied:
    - (1) The request and the supervisor/principal's rationale for the denial should be forwarded to the site's Division Head or the school's designated assistant superintendent.
    - (2) The Division Head or designated assistant superintendent shall send his/her comment and recommendation to the Chief Human Resources Officer who, in consultation with the District's attorney, will make a final determination.

**E. UNCERTAINTY:**

Employees who have specific questions about a garment's acceptability should consult their supervisors or local administrators.

Reclassified an Administrative Rule: 9/1/04  
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