

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Any individual Alexandria City public school may establish a school policy to assist students and parents/guardians who wish to participate in a practice of the wearing of uniforms by students while in attendance at such school during the regular school day.

Students are permitted to wear school uniforms to school on all attendance days, unless otherwise indicated by the school principal, to promote and maintain a positive learning environment, orderly school functions, student safety, and a sense of purpose and school pride in the student body. The school principal is authorized to designate special days on which this uniform policy is relaxed.

IMPLEMENTATION

The school shall schedule an open information meeting for parents and staff members at which the pros and cons of the issue and implementation procedures may be discussed. The principal shall preside at that meeting and copies of this policy and of the Virginia State Board of Education Guidelines for "The Wearing of Uniforms in Public Schools" shall be distributed. Additional meetings may be scheduled. If there is sufficient interest in pursuing a uniform policy, the method of selecting parents/guardians, students, and staff members to serve on a uniform coordinating committee shall be determined at the meeting and the members selected. The building principal shall be a member of the coordinating committee. All meetings of the coordinating committee shall be open to the public.

Following the information meeting(s), the coordinating committee shall conduct a written survey of all families having students who attend the school, seeking support for the proposed voluntary uniform policy. The survey shall state that the policy shall be voluntary, that cost and affordability issues shall be addressed, and that the coordinating committee shall recommend the style of uniform and the implementation procedures to be followed.

If at least 60 percent of the survey respondents endorse the proposed uniform policy, the coordinating committee shall forward its recommendations to the building principal. The ~~school~~ principal shall designate a school--wide uniform after receiving input from the coordinating committee, students, parents/guardians, school staff members, and interested community members.

~~The Superintendent shall establish regulations to implement this policy including establishing a means of providing assistance in procuring uniforms to eligible students without utilizing public funds.~~

UNIFORMS

Students may:

1. display religious messages on items of clothing to the same extent they are permitted

to display other messages;

2. wear attire that is part of a student's religious practice;
3. wear or display expressive items, such as a button, as long as such items do not contribute to disruption by substantially interfering with discipline or with the rights of others; and
4. wear the uniform of nationally recognized youth organizations, such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, on regular meeting days.

No student shall be denied attendance at school, penalized, or otherwise subject to compliance measures for failing to wear a uniform by reason of:

1. personal choice;
2. insufficient time in which to procure uniforms to comply with this policy;
3. financial hardship; or
4. written objection by the student's parents/guardians on religious grounds to the student's compliance with this policy or the applicable uniform.

No student shall be suspended or expelled from school, or receive a lowered academic grade, as a result of not complying with this policy. A school may develop incentives and positive reinforcement measures to encourage participation.

Adopted: December 17, 1998

Amended:

LEGAL REFS: Code of Virginia, as amended, section 22.1-79.2.
Virginia State Board of Education, Guidelines, The Wearing of Uniforms in Public Schools.
Tinker v Des Moines Independent School District, 89 S.Ct. 7 (1969)

CROSS REFS: Alexandria City Public Schools Student Code of Conduct