

Policy Code: 7340 Employee Dress and Appearance

All faculty and employees of the Wake County Public School System serve as role models for the students with whom they work and as leaders in the community. The board believes that the appearance and the conduct of its faculty are of supreme importance in establishing a positive image for education in the community and for presenting a good example for students. Therefore, the ~~b~~Board affirms its expectation that all personnel will be professionally, neatly, and appropriately attired for the work to be done. An employee's dress must not disrupt or distract from the educational process or work environment and must be in accordance with health and safety standards.

A. Guidelines for Employee Dress and Appearance

The superintendent or designee shall develop and communicate to employees guidelines for appropriate dress and appearance. Such guidelines (1) must be gender-neutral and non-discriminatory; ~~(2) must permit protective, natural, or cultural hairstyles, including but not limited to such hairstyles as braids, dreadlocks, locs, twists, tight coils or curls, cornrows, Bantu knots, afros, geles, hair ties, and headwraps;~~ ~~(2) may authorize the principal or department supervisors to develop specific dress or appearance requirements for each school or department;~~ (3) may authorize exemptions deviations from the guidelines for employees performing specialized duties that require a different form of dress; ~~(4) must comply with any health and safety guidelines for specific positions;~~ and ~~(45) must provide a process for offering reasonable accommodations when required by law. Any deviations because of specialized duties or restrictions related to health and safety requirements must be applied consistently without regard to race, ethnicity, or other protected status. The principal or department supervisors may develop additional specific dress or appearance requirements for each school or department that are consistent with the guidelines described in this policy. Administrative and supervisory personnel shall encourage and expect employees to dress in accordance with the Board's expectations.~~

B. Addressing Violations of Dress and Appearance Guidelines

~~Administrative and supervisory personnel shall set a good example in personal appearance and good manners and shall encourage and expect employees to dress in accordance with the board's expectations.~~ An employee's supervisor will make an initial determination of whether an employee's dress or appearance is inappropriate. In making this determination, the supervisor will consider the following factors:

1. the nature of the work;
2. whether the dress is consistent with a professional environment;
3. health and safety factors;

4. the nature of the employee's public contact ~~and the normal expectations of outside parties with whom the employee will work;~~
5. the employee's interaction with students; and
- ~~6. the prevailing practices of other workers in similar jobs; and~~
- ~~7~~6. any properly established guidelines for dress or appearance.

If the supervisor determines that the employee's dress or appearance violates the established guidelines or is hazardous to the health or safety of the employee, fellow employees, or students, the supervisor shall counsel the employee regarding attire that is consistent with this policy and shall determine whether the employee is allowed to remain at work or must leave work to change ~~his or her dress~~ attire. Any failure to follow the supervisor's directive and/or blatant or repeated violations of this policy will subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, [42 U.S.C. 12101](#) *et seq.*; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, [42 U.S.C. 2000e](#) *et seq.*; Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, [P.L. 117-328](#), div. II - Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; [Bostock v. Clayton County](#), 590 U.S. ___, 140 S. Ct. 1731 (2020); [G.S. 115C-36, -47](#)

Cross References:

Approved:

Wake County Board of Education