

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**POLICY 9210**  
**DRESS CODE**

Effective: September 9, 1999

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**Policy Statement**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of the educational environment in promoting excellence in teaching and learning. It is also sensitive to the need to balance student attire and appearance as a personal concern with its responsibility to provide an environment that is safe, nurturing, and supportive of the school system's academic goals and educational responsibilities. Accordingly, student dress and appearance shall be the basic responsibility of students and their parents/guardians so long as they are consistent with the school system's responsibility to ensure that school environments are conducive to student learning and with its expectations for health and safety. Attire that interferes with the educational process or which is unsafe is prohibited from wear by students in The Howard County Public School System.

Any disciplinary action taken as a result of a violation of this policy should be administered using the Howard County Student Code of Conduct and in accordance with Policy 9200, Discipline.

The Superintendent is directed to develop regulations and procedures to implement this policy.

Original Approval: June 1, 1971

Date of Revision:     January 25, 1990  
                              September 9, 1999

**I. Definitions**

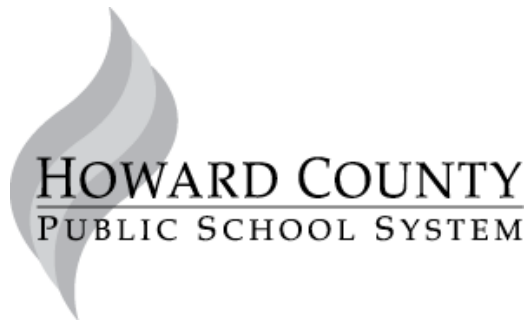
- A. Attire - clothing, headwear, jewelry, bookbags, or other articles of personal appearance.

**II. Regulations**

- A. Information regarding student attire during school hours and during other school activities shall be made known to all students, parents/guardians, and staff members at the beginning of the school year, and when deemed necessary by the principal.
- B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to wear attire that interferes with the educational mission of schools, is disruptive to the school environment, or that could endanger the health or safety of that student or others during school hours and school activities. This includes, but is not limited to, attire that:
1. Depicts profanity, obscenity, the use of weapons, or violence.
  2. Promotes use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal or harmful products.
  3. Contains sexually suggestive messages.
  4. Unduly exposes or reveals skin or undergarments.
  5. Depicts gang affiliation.
  6. Contains language or symbols that demean an identifiable person or group or otherwise infringe on the rights of others.
  7. Causes or is likely to cause a substantial or material disruption to school activities or the orderly operation of the school.
  8. Contains rude, disrespectful, or discourteous expressions inconsistent with civil discourse and behavior.
- C. Alleged violations of this policy arising from attire worn for medical reasons or as an expression of a student's religious practices shall be given special consideration before a final determination is made.
- D. Personal appearance shall meet health and sanitary standards.

- E. Principals are authorized to develop dress code policies by school level that incorporate the provisions of this policy as a minimum standard in order to establish an appropriate learning environment.
- F. Schools are authorized to develop school-specific dress code policies that incorporate the provisions of this policy as a minimum standard in order to establish an appropriate learning environment.

Original Approval: June 1, 1971  
Revised: January 25, 1990  
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**POLICY 9210-PR**  
IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES  
**DRESS CODE**

Effective: September 9, 1999

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- I. The principal is directed to inform all students, parents/guardians, and staff of the Dress Code Policy at the beginning of each school year, and when deemed appropriate. This may be done in the following ways:
    - A. Announcements via the public address system at the beginning of the school year.
    - B. Publish the information in school newsletters.
    - C. Publish the information in student handbooks, etc.
    - D. Post the information on a bulletin board.
    - E. Make the information available for new students through the registration process.
  - II. If any student is deemed to be in violation of this Dress Code Policy by a member of the staff, that student should be referred to the principal or designee who will promptly conduct an investigation to determine if a violation has, in fact, occurred.
  - III. If it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, the principal may allow the student to remove/change attire. This may include attire delivered by the parent/guardian, gym attire, or other attire available at the school site (e.g., donated clothing, etc.). If the student fails to comply, the parent/guardian will be contacted prior to any disciplinary action.
  - IV. The principal or designee may take disciplinary action using the Howard County Code of Conduct and Course of Disciplinary Action, and in accordance with Policy 9200, Discipline.

Administrative Approval: January 25, 1990

Revised: September 9, 1999