

**A. Purpose**

To provide guidance to Frederick County Public School (FCPS) employees regarding the expectations when enforcing the student dress code and to ensure the student dress code is enforced consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size.

**B. Background**

1. FCPS does not regulate the dress and/or appearance of students unless the attire impacts their ability to actively engage in learning, disrupts the school environment, promotes illegal or harmful activities, or could endanger the health or safety of the student or others during the school day, while participating in school-sponsored activities and events, and while being transported to and from school or school-sponsored activities and events.
2. The student dress code is intended to support a positive, respectful, and non-disruptive learning environment and respect students' rights to express themselves through their choice of personal attire.
3. Standards for student dress during the school day, while participating in school-sponsored activities and events, and while being transported to and from school or school-sponsored activities and events are detailed in Board of Education of Frederick County (Board) [Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#), and this Regulation.

**C. Definitions**

1. "Adornment" is defined to mean something that is worn in addition to, but not replacing, graduation attire.
2. "Attire" is defined to mean articles or aspects of personal appearance including, but not limited to, clothing, footwear, headwear, face mask/face covering, jewelry, bookbags, or sunglasses.
3. "Face Mask" or "Face Covering" is defined to mean a covering that a student may elect to wear that fully covers a student's nose and mouth and is secured to the student's head.
4. "Health" is defined to mean a state of physical, mental, and social well-being.
5. "Religion" is defined to mean a recognized system of belief or worship encompassing the nature of a deity and/or reality and the relationship of human beings to that deity and/or reality.

6. “Safety” is defined to mean the condition of being protected against physical and/or emotional harm.
7. “School Property” or “School Grounds” is defined to mean any school or other FCPS facility, including grounds owned or operated by FCPS, FCPS buses and other FCPS vehicles, chartered vehicles, and the facility and/or grounds of any FCPS-sponsored activity involving students.
8. “School-Related Activity” or “School-Sponsored Activity” is defined to mean any school system activity, on or off school property, in which a student directly participates (*e.g.*, school field trip, athletic event, or class/graduation activity), or an activity in which the student does not directly participate but represents the school or student body simply by being present (*e.g.*, spectator at a school event).
9. “Staff” is defined to mean all FCPS school system and contracted employees.
10. “Traditional Tribal Regalia or Objects of Cultural or Religious Significance” is defined to mean formal attire used in recognized practices and traditions of cultural or religious significance.

#### **D. Procedures**

##### **1. Implementation and Enforcement Standards and Expectations**

- a. All staff must implement and enforce this Regulation and [Board Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#), in a consistent, equitable, respectful, and non-discriminatory manner. School administration and staff must not deviate from the requirements/provisions of this Regulation and [Board Policy 439](#) in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.
- b. Staff must address dress code violations discreetly and with sensitivity to prevent any embarrassment or singling out of students.
- c. School administrators should utilize reasonable and prudent judgment in the enforcement of the student dress code, this Regulation, and [Board Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#).
- d. School administrators should contact the appropriate School Administration and Instructional Leadership (SAIL) Director with any questions regarding this Regulation, [Board Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#), and its implementation and enforcement.

##### **2. Communication**

- a. The appropriate SAIL Director will communicate annually with school principals regarding the standards and expectations for implementing and enforcing this Regulation and [Board Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#), including ensuring equitable student dress code enforcement, promoting cultural sensitivity, and respecting students' rights.
- b. The principal or their designee is responsible for ensuring that all students, staff, and parents are informed annually, at the beginning of each school year, and as needed, about the provisions of this Regulation and [Board Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#).

- c. Details regarding the progressive discipline of student dress code violations are outlined in the [FCPS Student Code of Conduct](#), which is distributed within the first thirty (30) calendar days of the school year.

**3. Disciplinary Measures**

- a. Students who are found to be in violation of [Board Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#), shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with [Board Policy 403, Student Discipline](#), [FCPS Regulation 403-01, Student Discipline](#), and the [FCPS Student Code of Conduct](#).
- b. Disciplinary action may be taken to encourage compliance with the policy. However, since the intent of this regulation and [Board Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#), is not to inhibit or prohibit any student from receiving the education to which they are entitled, no student shall be suspended from class or from school, or expelled from school as a result of noncompliance, unless there are serious aggravating factors/circumstances.
- c. Disciplinary responses will be administered in proportion to the severity of the behavior, its impact on the school environment, the student's age and grade level, the student's previous discipline history, and other relevant factors. The primary consideration is correction of a problem by the quickest and most reasonable method so that the instructional program for students may proceed with the least possible disruption.

**4. Prohibited Attire.** Students cannot wear attire that impacts their ability to actively engage in learning, disrupts the school environment, promotes illegal or harmful activities, or could endanger the health or safety of that student or others during the school day and school - related activities. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Visible undergarments, including fabric that is not opaque, meaning it should not be see-through.
- b. Attire that obscures the identity of an individual (*e.g.*, ski masks, balaclavas, other hooded garments that are pulled up, etc.).
- c. Attire that depicts, advertises, or advocates for the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other controlled substances.
- d. Attire that depicts pornography, nudity, and sexual acts.
- e. Attire that contains sexually suggestive messages.
- f. Attire that depicts gang affiliation.
- g. Attire that contains rude, disrespectful or discourteous expressions inconsistent with civil discourse and behavior.
- h. Attire that contains language and/or displays images, symbols, materials, or other items that promote hatred, racial or ethnic violence, intimidation, or harassment.
- i. Attire that causes or is likely to cause a material disruption, a substantial disorder to the orderly and safe operation of the school or at school-sponsored activities, or an invasion of the rights of others.

**5. Face Masks/Coverings.** Students may wear a face mask, headscarf, or face covering for personal or health-related reasons.

**6. Headwear Guidelines by School Level**

- a. School administration, at all school levels, may permit approved headwear for school

spirit celebrations.

- b. **Elementary and Middle School Students.** Elementary and middle school students are not permitted to wear headwear unless it is for religious reasons.
- c. **High School Students.** High school students are permitted to wear headwear as long as it does not actively impede their ability to engage in learning.

## 7. Violation Types and Responses

### a. Headwear – Level 1 Violation

- i. The staff member shall request that the student remove their headwear.
- ii. Appropriate communication will be made to the student's family in a timely manner.

### b. Hate Symbols – Level 2 to 4 Violation.

In accordance with FCPS's Hate Bias reporting protocols, staff must immediately refer the student to an administrator, who will intervene and take appropriate corrective action. This includes any violations that reinforce or increase the marginalization or oppression of any individual or group.

### c. Other Potential Violations.

For potential violations not specifically listed above, staff must refer the student to an administrator, who will intervene and take appropriate corrective action.

### d. Chronic or Repeated Violations.

Chronic or repeated violations will be addressed in accordance with the [FCPS Student Code of Conduct](#), specifically under the categories of "Disrespect" or "Disruption" listed in the Student Discipline Matrix.

## 8. Attire for Commencement and Graduation-Related Activities

### a. Graduating students are expected to wear the traditional commencement attire, including a cap and gown. Authorized attire may also include stoles, honor cords, and medals awarded by FCPS, FCPS's recognized partner community organizations and groups, or the State of Maryland, with specific exceptions as detailed in sections D(5)(b) and (c) below.

### b. Exceptions.

A student may adorn the cap, gown, or stole customarily worn at their school with traditional tribal regalia or objects of cultural or religious significance.

### c. Requests for Approval to Wear Adornments

- i. Students are required to request permission from school administration to wear an adornment in advance of the commencement ceremony.
- ii. The district reserves the right to prohibit any adornment that is obscene, defamatory, fraudulent, profane, threatening, inappropriate, disruptive, or violates this Regulation or [Board Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#).
- iii. If it is determined that an adornment would cause a substantial disruption based on reliable evidence, the student's request may be denied.
- iv. Students will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony wearing any adornments that have not been approved in advance.

### d. Graduation-Related Activities.

Dress code guidelines for the senior awards program at individual schools will be determined by the staff member(s) designated by the principal.

## E. Related Information

1. **Board Policy**

- a. [Policy 111, School and Workplace Safety](#)
- b. [Policy 117, Anti-Racism](#)
- c. [Policy 404, Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- d. [Policy 423, Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior](#)
- e. [Policy 439, Student Dress Code](#)
- f. [Policy 444, Educational Equity and Excellence](#)

2. **FCPS Regulations**

- a. [Regulation 400-10, Commencement Procedures and Ceremonies](#)
- b. [Regulation 403-01, Student Discipline](#)

3. **FCPS Resources**

- a. [FCPS Student Code of Conduct](#)

**F. Regulation History** (Maintained by Legal Services)

<i>Responsible Office</i>	System Accountability & School Administration
Adoption Dates	05/27/25
Review Dates	
Revision Dates	