

Student Dress Code

349

In the interest of encouraging positive school spirit, disciplined and focused educational environment, and promoting student safety, Rio Rancho Public Schools establishes the following Dress Code and Standard of Decency governing student dress at school and while participating in school-sponsored activities. Administrators shall have the discretion to determine the appropriateness of attire and grooming, and may make special exceptions for students in certain grades/subjects, such as vocational courses, physical education, for medical necessities.

Enforcement of this policy shall be in accordance with District disciplinary procedures for students. Enforcement of this policy shall not infringe on any individual's religious beliefs or protected free speech.

Dress Code and Standard of Decency

Students are expected to demonstrate personal grooming standards of cleanliness and to wear appropriate clothing while on campus, on field trips, and during off-campus events at which students represent Rio Rancho Schools for athletics or activities. Any personal grooming or clothing that disrupts the educational process or is provocative in nature is in violation of the Dress Code and Standard of Decency

The Dress Code and Standard of Decency includes but is not limited to the following:

A. Allowed:

- All colors including, prints, checks, stripes, and plaids
- Shirts with or without collars

B. Not allowed:

- Insignias can be no larger than 3 inches x 3 inches. **No graphics, pictures, or writing on clothing shall be permitted except as part of an insignia.**
- Revealing or see-through clothing
- Exposed underwear including boxers, sports bras, and bras
- Saggy pants revealing underwear or any portion of the body below the naval.
- Dresses, skirts, shorts, and skorts, including slits, shorter three (3) inches above the bend of the knee.
- Sleeveless tops: all tops (male and female) are to have a sleeve
- Pajamas (tops or bottoms), unless it is a sanctioned school function, i.e., pajama day
- Ripped or torn clothing
- Bandanas, 'do-rags', shower caps, and hairnets
- Spiked jewelry and jewelry that is obscene, disruptive to the educational process or that could endanger students
- Belt loop chains, wallet chains, and extended belts
- Trench coats
- Heelys
- Flip-flops (elementary school)
- Clothing and/or articles worn or carried by the student (includes face painting) displaying words or symbols or colors of gangs, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, racism, inappropriate language or images, or symbols of a sexual/sexist nature
- Clothing and/or articles in violation of Policy 346, Gang Activity, which states that students shall not "wear . . . any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign or other items that evidences or reflects membership in or affiliation with any gang"
- Visible cleavage, navels, and/or midriffs. No skin should be shown between the bottom of the shirt / blouse and the top of the pants/skirt when arms are stretched upward
- Tube tops, spaghetti strap tops, halter tops, translucent blouses, midriff shirts/blouses

Other provisions:

- Footwear that is safe and appropriate for weather and other conditions must be worn at all times on campus and in buildings
- If a coat or jacket is worn inside a building, it must remain open
- Hair shall be groomed so that it is clean and safe for participation in any school activity
- Hats and sunglasses may not be worn inside buildings, but are allowed outside
- Spandex is only allowed under approved shirts, shorts, skirts, and dresses
- Approved school spirit wear for all RRPS schools, Scout uniforms, and JROTC uniforms are permitted
- Approved special event day dress is permitted
- Mid-School and high school students' school-issued ID badges must be available or presented at request at all times and may not be defaced in any way

Consequences for Violation of the Student Dress Code/Standard of Decency

First offense: Students who violate the Dress Code will be issued a Dress Code referral and will be required to:

- 1) change into other clothing they may have with them if it conforms to this policy, or
- 2) change into clothing provided by the school, or
- 3) be sent home

The time missed from class will be considered “unexcused.” Clothing that is “borrowed” must be returned clean to the main office on the day following the incident.

Second and subsequent offenses: Students will face disciplinary consequences as defined in the Student Code of Conduct and outlined in the Student Handbook, which may include penalties up to out-of-school suspension.

Waivers

Waivers may be granted by the principal or site administrator subject to the following criteria:

1. Religious Freedom: Families whose religious beliefs require wearing attire that does not conform to the dress code and whose membership or affiliation with that denomination or sect can be verified
2. Health or Physical Disability - a health or disability issue documented by a medical professional or through an IEP which would preclude the student from being able to wear regular clothes to school for a specified period of time
3. Financial Hardship – families who for a period of time meet one of the following criteria and who can document this situation:
 - a. homelessness,
 - b. head of family is unemployed or on disability,
 - c. families with children who receive general public assistance or some other form of documented financial aid.

The portions of the Dress Code and Standard of Decency pertaining to insignia size, the prohibition of pictures or writing on clothing, the display of words or symbols or colors of gangs, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, racism, inappropriate language or images, or symbols of a sexual/sexist nature, and to violations of Policy 346 are not subject to waiver. All students will be expected to comply with these provisions of the standard of decency.

Except as described in the previous paragraph, no student shall be denied attendance at school, penalized or otherwise subject to compliance measures for failing to obey the dress code if a waiver of this policy has been obtained.

Application process for waivers

Parents of students who qualify for a waiver must fill out a waiver request form at the student's school site during the two weeks prior to the opening of school. Parents of students new to the district must apply for a waiver within two weeks of the date of the student's enrollment. During the two-week period students must meet the district's dress code expectations.

Parent's requesting temporary waivers for health reasons must apply for a waiver at the student's school site prior to the student's return to school.

Appeal of denial of waiver

The decision of the principal or school site administrator may be appealed to the Superintendent or designee whose decision shall be final. Any parent requesting review by the Superintendent must submit a request in writing to the Office of the Superintendent within three (3) working days of the principal or administrators' denial. The Superintendent shall issue a final determination within three (3) working days of receipt of the request for review.

Annual policy review

This policy will be subject to annual evaluation and review in a manner to be determined by the Rio Rancho Board of Education.

Replaces Policies:

348 - Dress Code

349 - School Uniforms

See Policy (346) Gang Activity