**EMPLOYEE DRESS AND APPEARANCE** *Policy Code:* **7340**

The board believes that the appearance and the conduct of its faculty and staff are of supreme importance in establishing a positive image for education in the community and for presenting a good example for students. Therefore, the board affirms its expectation that all personnel will be professionally, neatly and appropriately attired for the work to be done. This policy applies to student teachers, substitutes and temporary employees. An employee's dress must not disrupt or distract from the educational process and must be in accordance with health and safety standards. The superintendent shall develop and communicate to all employees guidelines for appropriate dress and appearance. The overriding principle is that all employees, while on duty, are representatives of Whiteville City Schools.

**DETERMINATION OF APPROPRIATE DRESS**

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;

6. The prevailing practices of other workers in similar jobs; and

7. Any properly established guidelines for dress or appearance.

**GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE DRESS**

In addition, the board establishes the following guidelines for appropriate dress:

1. Supervisory Personnel, both District and school-based should set the climate and standard of professionalism for the Whiteville City Schools. Their dress and appearance should be business-like in style.

2. Instructional Personnel are considered professional employees and should dress in a neat and professional manner appropriate to the standards of their profession and school. Men should wear appropriate pants with shirts and ties, shirts with collars, and/or sweaters. Women should wear dresses or appropriate tops with skirts or slacks.

3. The dress and appearance of clerical personnel, especially those who hold positions which involve contact with the public, should emphasize neatness and professionalism appropriate to the office environment.

4. Support Personnel in Plant Operations and Custodial Services shall wear uniforms provided. Other support personnel such as child nutritionists and bus drivers should dress appropriate to their specific duties and consistent with the next paragraph, item 5 below.

5. An employee’s dress or appearance may not be so unusual, inappropriate or lacking in neatness and cleanliness that it clearly disrupts class or learning activities. The following attire is considered inappropriate for school employees:

a. Jewelry affixed to an employee’s nose, tongue, cheek, lip, or eyebrow;

b. Clothing which is disruptive, provocative, revealing, indecent, vulgar, or obscene to which the following guidelines apply:

Skirts or dresses may be no higher than three (3) inches above the

top of the knee

Low necklines, bare midriffs, spaghetti straps, camisole tops, and overly tight clothing are not appropriate dress for schoolemployees;

c. Clothing which promotes alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or the use of controlled substances by words or symbols, or is of a disruptive nature;

d. Clothing or body art that contains profanity, nudity, depicts violence or is sexual in nature by words or symbols;

e. Rubber flip flops;

f. Undergarments worn as an outer garment or any see-through clothing;

g. Hats, sweatbands bandannas, or sunglasses inside school buildings; and

h. Sweat suits unless in a physical education or coaching position.

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. 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.

**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

Reasonable accommodations shall be made by the supervisor for those employees who, because of a sincerely-held religious belief, cultural heritage, or medical reason, request a waiver of a particular part of this policy for dress or appearance.

Reasonable modifications to this policy may be made by the appropriate supervisor or principal to accommodate staff members who are engaged in specialized duties such as physical education, vocational education, field trips, or workdays that require a relaxed mode of dress or on “special occasion days” such as spirit days.

Though jeans, recreational shorts, and wind suits are not the standard of acceptable dress, they may be worn when deemed appropriate by the immediate supervisor or principal when staff members are engaged in specialized duties such as set forth in the preceding paragraph.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -47

Cross References:

Adopted: 14 April 2011