

Dress and Grooming Policy

Merkel ISD

2023-2024

Board Approved 7.25.2023

MISD has established the expectation that students shall present themselves at school in attire that is tidy and well-maintained. Additionally, we require students to observe basic personal hygiene and grooming practices to ensure the well-being and safety of both themselves and their peers and staff. The principal is entrusted with the responsibility of addressing any infractions related to dress code and grooming standards. As a result, the principal is vested with the authority to exercise their judgment when determining suitable attire and grooming standards.

New students relocating to the district are granted a period of ten (10) calendar days to adhere to the dress and grooming standards specified in this document.

In the event that your child arrives at school dressed in attire that contravenes the established dress code or fails to adhere to our dress and grooming guidelines, they will be subject to in-school suspension until such time that they comply. Our priority is to inform you promptly about the situation. If the student takes steps to rectify the dress or grooming concern and aligns with the standards, they will be reintegrated into their regular classes without delay.

The dress code implemented by the District serves the purpose of imparting lessons on grooming and hygiene, mitigating potential disruptions, and reducing safety hazards.

Students and parents have the authority to establish personal dress and grooming standards for the student, on the condition that these standards align with the following guidelines:

- As part of our dress code policy, students are prohibited from wearing any clothing intended to be worn as an undergarment as their outer clothing.
- As per the dress code regulations, students are not permitted to wear strapless, spaghetti straps, tank tops, cut tops, half-shirts, or mesh shirts. Additionally, all shirts and blouses should be of adequate length to ensure the midriff remains covered (particularly when arms are raised), and they must be appropriately buttoned. For sleeveless shirts and blouses in grades 6-12, they must have a minimum width of three inches, remain unaltered, and have snug armholes to prevent the exposure of undergarments.
- Within the dress code guidelines, students are permitted to wear shorts, dresses, or skirts as long as they are hemmed and no shorter than the fingertips when arms are placed at the sides.
 - However, un-hemmed cut-off shorts or spandex shorts are not permissible under the dress code policy.
- According to the dress code guidelines, leggings, tights, yoga pants, or similar attire are acceptable if they are accompanied by an approved top that reaches at least fingertip length with arms at the side.
 - However, for grades 6-12, leggings with sheer inserts are not permitted.
 - In grades EE-5, leggings, yoga pants, or similar attire are allowed if they are modestly covered, and leggings with sheer inserts are still not allowed.
- As part of the dress code policy, students are prohibited from wearing excessively tight clothing and/or low-cut blouses or tops that reveal cleavage and/or midriff.
- Students are required to wear suitable footwear at all times.
 - For the safety and well-being of students, it may be recommended or mandated to have appropriate shoes for specific classes such as science, FCS (Family and Consumer Sciences), P.E. (Physical Education), Ag (Agriculture) and Industrial Arts (Welding or Shop). Please note that wheeled shoes and house shoes are not allowed within the school premises.

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- The dress code strictly prohibits the use of explicit or insinuating apparel or accessories that may disrupt the educational process.
 - This includes any attire displaying vulgarity, or promoting alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs, sex, or violence. Such items are not allowed within the school environment.
- As per the dress code guidelines, jeans should not have any holes above the approved hemline, which is defined as no shorter than fingertip length when arms are at the side.
 - If jeans do have holes above this hemline, students are required to wear tights underneath the pants.
 - Moreover, jeans must be worn appropriately, maintaining them at the waistline, and sagging jeans, defined as pants worn low enough to expose the underwear, are not permitted.
- The dress code allows for specific piercings, **limited to ears and nasal areas only**.
 - For **grades 6-12**, nasal piercing is restricted to a single stud, and gauging is not permitted.
 - However, for **grades EE-5**, piercing is allowed solely on the ears, and gauging remains prohibited.
- Facial hair must be well-groomed and neat in appearance.
- Tattoos, whether temporary or permanent, must be appropriate for the school setting and not otherwise offensive or disruptive to the individual's school or work environment.
 - **Any tattoo that does not meet these standards must be covered on request by an administrator.**
- Students should avoid extremes in hairstyles that attract so much attention that they interfere with the learning environment.
 - Hair should be kept clean and well groomed.
 - Hair should be kept out from in front of the eyes.
- Students are not allowed to wear hats in the buildings during instruction time (except for campus-approved hat days, dress-up days, etc.).
 - If a student wears a hat into the building, the hat will be taken up and returned.
 - Hoodies will be treated the same as a hat.
 - Head coverings must be school-approved.
 - **Hats are allowed during extracurricular activities, such as volleyball, football, basketball games, and other events (non-instructional events).**
- Students are not allowed to wear pajamas to school (except for campus-approved dress-up days).
- No trench coats of any kind.
- No gang-related dress or grooming items are permitted.

Students attending extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events are expected to adhere to the dress code requirements, unless otherwise communicated by the school administration. (For instance, hats may be worn during extracurricular or non-instructional events as long as they are appropriate for the school setting.)

Some school-sponsored days and/or events may require exceptions to the above dress code policy as determined by the school administration.

Students engaged in extracurricular or co curricular activities will be subject to distinct dress and grooming standards that are separate from the guidelines provided in this document.