



PROCEDURE

Title: **STUDENT DRESS**

Procedure No.: 5020a

Effective Date: 2024 June 25

Department: Learning Support Services – Equity
Director's Services – Human Rights and Equity

Reference(s): Human Rights Code
Ontario College of Teacher Act Professional Misconduct Regulation
TVDSB Equity and Inclusive Education Policy
TVDSB Religious and Creed-Based Accommodation of Staff Policy
TVDSB Religious and Creed-Based Accommodation of Students Policy
TVDSB Safe Schools Policy and Procedure
TVDSB Accommodation Policy and Procedure

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Procedure is to implement the TVDSB Student Dress Policy by

- Providing specific expectations for student dress in all Thames Valley District School Board ("TVDSB", "the board") schools that are consistent with the Board's commitments in its Student Dress Policy and its obligations under Ontario's *Human Rights Code* ("the Code"); and
- Describing the process for school staff and administration to address student dress questions, concerns, and contraventions, and ensuring the process is fair, equitable, and prioritizes the safety and fundamental rights of students.

2.0 Key Terms

Cultural appropriation means taking intellectual property, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, or artifacts from someone else's culture without permission. This can include the use of another culture's dance, dress, music, language, folklore, cuisine, traditional medicine, religious symbols, etc. without permission.

Cultural appropriation is most likely to be harmful when the community that is impacted is a group that has been oppressed or exploited in other ways or when the object being appropriated is particularly sensitive (e.g., sacred objects).

Headwear means coverings or accessories for the head such as, but not limited to hats, caps, scarves, and wraps or other fabric, including creed-based headwear (e.g., hijab).

Progressive Discipline means a whole-school approach to promoting and fostering positive behaviours that uses a range of prevention programs, interventions, strategies, supports, and

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consequences to address student misconduct.

3.0 Student Dress Expectations

3.1 Specific requirements

Student dress must comply with any specific health and safety requirements, protocols or considerations that apply to their courses, classes, and school activities. This may include, but is not limited to requirements regarding footwear, loose clothing, personal protective equipment, or other specialized equipment specific to an activity.

3.2 Safety, non-discrimination

Student dress shall not include language or graphics that could reasonably be construed, considering all the facts and circumstances, as promoting, symbolizing, displaying, or suggesting hate or discrimination, drugs, alcohol, illegal activity, profanity, pornography, or violence.

A student shall not appropriate a culture that is not their own through their dress.

3.3 Footwear

Footwear must be worn. Students and caregivers must consider the health and safety of the student and others at school in choosing footwear.

3.4 Functional and suitable dress

Student dress that is functional and suitable for a K-12 learning environment is made from opaque (not see-through or transparent) material and covers the groin, buttocks, and nipples.

Undergarments (e.g., boxers, briefs, bras or any form of lingerie) worn as the only layer of clothing, and swimwear worn other than as required for an activity with the permission of a principal, are not suitable for a K-12 education environment.

3.5 Headwear

Headwear may be worn. Headwear must not fully obscure the student's face.

3.6 Religious and/or creed-based symbols

Religious and/or creed-based symbols may be worn, consistent with this Procedure and the Student Dress Policy, and the TVDSB Religious and Creed-Based Accommodation Procedure.

3.7 Athletic wear

Students must have a choice of athletic wear with different levels of coverage, including short and long-sleeved tops, short and full-length bottoms, and layers. All students must be given the same choices regardless of gender identity.

Athletic dress will include options that are easy to change into and inclusive of students of all sizes and abilities. Choices will include an upper layer that can be easily pulled over the head and any headwear that is not to be removed at school.

4.0 Requests for Accommodation

Where this Procedure is not inclusive of all dress choices connected to aspects of a student's identity protected by the *Code*, the student has a right to accommodation to the point of undue hardship and consistent with all other applicable human rights law principles.

5.0 Contraventions

- 5.1 Principals, Vice-Principals and school staff will apply the Student Dress Policy and this Procedure fairly and equitably, considering students' individual needs and circumstances.
- 5.2 Where a contravention of the Policy and/or this Procedure is believed to have occurred or be occurring, Principals and Vice-Principals will speak with the student(s) and the student's caregiver (unless the student is 18 years old) and will approach this dialogue in a manner that is bias-aware, prioritizes education, affirms the student's identity, and protects privacy. Under no circumstances will dialogue with a student about their dress have the effect of shaming the student.
- 5.3 Decisions by Principals and Vice-Principals that a student's dress does not align with the Policy and Procedure will also be bias-aware and evidence based, and will prioritize education of students, caregivers, and staff as appropriate.
- 5.4 Student dress that does not align with the Policy and this Procedure and that threatens health and safety or promotes violence or hatred will be treated as a serious violation of Thames Valley's Safe Schools Policy and Procedure; all other student dress conversations will focus on education and awareness.
- 5.5 A range of corrective action will be considered to address persistent or blatant non-compliance with student dress expectations in the Procedure, according to the principles of progressive discipline as described in the Safe Schools Procedure.
- 5.6 To address student dress that does not meet the expectations in the Student Dress Policy and this Procedure, Principals and Vice-Principals may ask the student to change, remove or cover the aspect of dress that is of concern.