

The Limestone District School Board is committed to upholding human rights, and creating an equitable, inclusive, and accessible school climate that ensures all students and staff feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. Student clothing and administrative enforcement should not reinforce or increase the marginalization or oppression of any individual or group and must be applied in a fair and consistent way and in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Schools need to be an effective learning and working environment and with this understanding and limited exceptions, choice of clothing must be respected.

## **1. Application**

This administrative procedure will apply in all schools, and to all LDSB education programs, including school activities that occur off school property.

## **2. Staff Responsibilities**

- 2.1. Staff are responsible for ensuring that student clothing does not interfere with student and staff health or safety requirements (e.g., proper footwear in technological education) and/or promote or symbolize drugs, alcohol, illegal activity, hate or discrimination (e.g. the Confederate flag), profanity, or pornography, and/or incite violence or harassment, and/or threaten health and safety.
- 2.2. Staff have the additional responsibility to support student health, safety, and well-being and foster positive school climates while affirming and respecting student choices and freedom of expression. The principal is responsible for day-to-day operations, implementation, and enforcement at the school level.

## **3. Students' Rights, Responsibilities and Expectations**

- 3.1. Students have the right to express themselves, feel comfortable in what they wear,

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Limestone District School Board is situated on traditional territories of the Anishinaabe & Haudenosaunee.



and have the freedom to make clothing choices (e.g., clothing, hairstyle, makeup, jewelry, fashion, style, culture, etc.). Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of others, and support a positive, respectful, safe, and shared environment.

- 3.2. Student clothing must conform to established health and safety requirements for the intended activity. (e.g., health and physical education classes, science and chemistry classes, sporting events, technical education, drama/dance classes, etc.) and/or as per Public Health safety requirements.
- 3.3. Students must wear a top and bottom layer of clothing of opaque material that covers the groin, buttocks, and mid-chest (breast and nipple area).
- 3.4. Students may wear tops that expose arms, shoulders, stomachs, midriff, necklines, cleavage, and straps.
- 3.5. Students may wear bottoms that expose legs, thighs, and hips and expose underwear bands.
- 3.6. Students may wear clothing or headwear that obscures the face as required by their religious practice or creed, or for health reasons. For example, a Niqab or medical/surgical masks.
- 3.7. Students may wear any headwear or head covering that does not obscure the face including but not limited to ball caps, head scarves, hoodies, toques, etc.
- 3.8. Students have a choice of athletic wear. Students may determine levels of coverage, including short and long-sleeved tops and short and full-length bottoms. All students must be given the same choices regardless of gender identity.
- 3.9. Students' clothing must not appropriate a culture that is not their own. This includes Halloween costumes and special clothing for theme days or days of significance. There will be ongoing dialogue with students, parents/families, and all LDSB staff that will focus on appropriation and its impact.



3.10. Students cannot wear anything that promotes discrimination towards groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religious affiliation, or any other protected ground. Discriminatory promotion includes, but is not limited to, displays of hate speech and depiction of symbols commonly associated with discrimination (eg. The Confederate Flag)”

3.11. Students cannot wear anything that promotes or symbolizes drugs, alcohol, illegal activity, profanity, or pornography, and/or that incites or depicts violence or harassment, and/or threatens health and safety. This includes clothing with sexual, sexist, or misogynistic innuendos.

3.12. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, students will be granted accommodations when required.

#### **4. Staff response to Violations of this Administrative Procedure**

4.1. Staff will respond to student clothing violations in a consistent and fair way that is inclusive and non-gender specific, avoiding reinforcing gender and other stereotypes.

4.2. Staff will sensitively address the situation with the student. Violations should be treated as minor; students should not be removed from class and violations should not interfere with the student’s access to their education and related activities unless the violation has occurred multiple times, or a violation under the Safe Schools Act or the Ontario Human Rights Code. For example, where the clothing promotes or includes discriminatory content, depicts, or displays hate speech targeting groups based on race (e.g., the Confederate flag), ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected grounds, promotes or symbolizes drugs, alcohol, illegal activity, profanity, or pornography and/or incites violence or harassment; and/or threatens health and safety.

4.3. Students should not be shamed or required to display their body in front of others



(students, parents/guardians, or staff) in school. “Shaming” includes but is not limited to kneeling or bending over to check attire fit, measuring straps or skirt length, asking students to account for their attire in the school, and directing students to correct a student clothing violation in the classroom or other public places.

- 4.4. Students in violation of this administrative procedure should never be forced to wear clothing that does not belong to them but can be asked to put on their own clothing if available.
- 4.5. Staff should offer a variety of choices to remedy any inappropriate clothing such as asking the student to wear additional clothing of their own to obscure the inappropriate clothing choice, to borrow additional clothing from a peer, contact a family member to bring extra clothes, or to wear new clothing provided by the school.
- 4.6. Students who refuse to comply with choices provided to remedy inappropriate clothing and/ or who repeatedly violate this administrative procedure may be subject to progressive discipline under AP 353: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behavior
- 4.7. Principals and vice-principals are responsible for the consistent and fair application of this administrative procedure. Principals are also responsible for supporting staff in their understanding of this administrative procedure and its application in the school.
- 4.8. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, this administrative procedure shall not be enforced where it would lead to increased marginalization, differential treatment, or discrimination.

## **5. Education and Awareness**

- 5.1. The Board will ensure that staff receives regular training and professional development to enhance their awareness about how assumptions or stereotypes



related to racial heritage, creed, gender roles, gender identities and expressions, socioeconomic status, disabilities, sexuality, etc. can reinforce bias, prejudice, and discrimination.

- 5.2. Staff and students will receive regular education on consent, healthy relationships, sexual harassment, bullying, and violence prevention, to enhance the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours that ensure diverse student clothing choices are accepted and respected.

## **6. Resolving Concerns or Complaints.**

- 6.1. Students and parents/families who have concerns or complaints related to this administrative procedure should speak to their principal or vice-principal. Principals and vice-principals will engage in dialogue with the student and/or student's parent(s)/family in a way that takes into account the individual circumstances and needs of the student to ensure that this administrative procedure is applied equitably.
- 6.2. Conversations around violations of this administrative procedure will focus on education and awareness unless it is a violation under the Safe Schools Act, the Ontario Human Rights Code, or the violation has occurred multiple times, in which case corrective action becomes necessary in accordance with AP 353: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behavior.
- 6.3. Students and parents/families can also submit a complaint using the Student Human Rights Incidents and Complaints Form.

## **7. Communication**

Expectations, rights, and responsibilities as outlined in this administrative procedure will be provided to students, parents/families, and staff at the beginning of every school year and clearly displayed in schools and posted online.



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## **8. Review**

This procedure is to be reviewed every 3 years.

### References

*Ontario Human Rights Code*

*AP 353: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour*

*AP 376: Student Human Rights Incidents and Complaints*