



**DURHAM CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**  
*Learning and Living in Faith*

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE – AP610-2**

### **Student Dress Code**

Area: Student Conduct and Safety  
Policy Reference: Code of Conduct Policy (PO610)

Approved: December 3, 2001  
Revised: October 2, 2017; April 7, 2026

#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to outline the guidelines and expectations regarding the dress code for students within the Durham Catholic District School Board (the “Board”), which includes both uniform and non-uniform dress. This administrative procedure aims to promote a positive learning environment that respects individual expression and cultural diversity. It emphasizes the dignity of each student, fostering a sense of belonging and respect within the school community. By following a dress code, students are encouraged to present themselves in a way that supports a positive, focused, and respectful learning environment.

#### **2. Definitions**

Nil

#### **3. Procedures**

##### **3.1 General Requirements**

- 3.1.1 All school dress codes, which may include uniform and non-uniform dress, shall comply with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Education Act – Regulation 298, and the Ontario Human Rights Code. School uniform dress shall also comply with the Board’s Purchasing of Goods and Services Policy (PO102) and Apparel Purchases and Fair Labour Practices Policy (PO422) and its attendant administrative procedure (AP422-1).
- 3.1.2 Every school must establish a dress code for students, which will be shared annually with parents/guardians and students (e.g., agenda, website, assemblies).

- 3.1.3 Dress codes must be flexible enough to provide accommodation for religious dress in secondary schools with uniforms.
  - 3.1.4 The Board respects cultural diversity and recognizes that clothing may hold different meanings across cultures. Staff members should exercise cultural sensitivity and consider individual circumstances. Religious and cultural clothing that should be reasonably accommodated in schools include, but are not limited to, head coverings, religious symbols, and items of ceremonial dress.
- 3.2 Compliance with the Student Dress Code
- 3.2.1 It is expected that every student in the school will comply with the dress code.
  - 3.2.2 All dress codes must include a provision that permits the principal to exercise discretion to allow exceptions to the school dress code.
  - 3.2.3 Parents/guardians are encouraged to be involved and active in the dress code/school uniform decision-making process through their Catholic School Councils (CSC) in consultation with the principal and school staff.
  - 3.2.4 Approved dress codes shall be reviewed by the principal and CSC every three (3) years, or sooner if necessary to comply with current legislation/regulations. The review shall have representation from students, educators, staff, and parents/guardians in the school.
  - 3.2.5 School staff and parents/guardians are expected to support the implementation of this administrative procedure in accordance with the provincial and school code of conduct.
  - 3.2.6 Staff members are responsible for enforcing the dress code in a respectful, fair, and consistent manner.
  - 3.2.7 Clothing and footwear should be suitable for educational activities, considering safety, comfort, and functionality (e.g., clothing or footwear that would not pose a trip hazard, loose clothing that could get caught in machinery, etc.).
  - 3.2.8 The following types of clothing are not permitted:
    - a) Clothing that displays profanity;
    - b) Clothing that promotes violence, discrimination, or illegal activities (e.g., alcohol and/or drug use);
    - c) Clothing that contains or is suggestive of sexual content (i.e., text and/or images);

- d) Clothing that promotes/displays discriminatory or hate-motivated references to any of the protected grounds under the Ontario Human Rights Code (e.g., nationality, race, gender, etc.); and
- e) Clothing that poses a safety hazard or interferes with participation in educational activities.

3.2.9 Students found in violation of the dress code will be reminded of the expectations and given an opportunity to comply.

3.2.10 Persistent violations may result in disciplinary action, which could include parent/guardian notification, temporary exclusion from certain activities, or other appropriate measures.

3.2.11 No student will be denied access to school as a result of inability to afford clothing required by a school's dress code.

### 3.3 School Uniform

#### 3.3.1 Uniform Requirements

- a) In schools with uniforms, students are required to adhere to the specified school uniform dress code.
- b) Only a school logo/name shall be permitted on school uniforms.
- c) Any clothing item worn under school uniform pieces, but still visible, must be in compliance with school dress codes (e.g., see 3.2.8) and generally will be in specified colours (e.g., undershirts, tights, socks).
- d) The following components will be at the discretion of the principal and the CSC:
  - i. Type and styles of clothing from the chosen school uniform provider;
  - ii. A dress code for non-uniform or spirit days.
- e) A school uniform assistance program shall be available in each school to ensure that access to discreet and confidential assistance, through the school principal, is available for families that have difficulty purchasing the school uniform due to financial hardship.
- f) All schools must use the Board's authorized school uniform vendor(s).

#### 3.3.2 Review and Monitoring

- a) The school dress code as part of this Student Dress Code administrative procedure shall be reviewed at the school every three (3) years in

consultation with the CSC. The review shall have representation from students, educators, staff, and parents/guardians in the schools.

### 3.3.3 Process to Change an Existing School Dress Code to Include a School Uniform:

- a) In the event that a school uniform is proposed for a school where it has not previously existed, the approval of the change must follow the following process:
  - i. The proposed change may only be reviewed by the CSC as part of the three-year review cycle.
  - ii. The principal, in conjunction with the CSC, must survey the school community to determine if there is sufficient interest in the school community to proceed with a formal voting process.
  - iii. Each family will have the opportunity to provide one response to the survey.
  - iv. The survey results (regardless of how many are returned) must demonstrate that at least 51% of the total number of families who completed the survey are in favour of proceeding to a formal vote. Families that do not respond to the survey are counted as a “No, we are not interested” vote. All parents must be informed of the results following the initial survey.
  - v. In preparation for the formal vote, the principal, in conjunction with the CSC, should establish the parameters of the proposed school uniform, with consideration given to:
    - Affordability;
    - Ease of purchase from local vendors;
    - Practicality and respect for the age, growth, and developmental stages of children;
    - Durability and ease of care;
    - Respect for cultural norms within the school community;
    - Alternative options for top-wear with at least two-colour options;
    - Options for seasonal temperature changes;
    - Approved footwear;
    - Inclusion of “Spirit Wear” as an option.
  - vi. In preparation for the formal vote, the principal, in conjunction with the CSC, should establish the parameters of the formal vote:
    - Clearly communicate which families are eligible to vote;
    - Every registered family with children in JK-6 of the current school year is eligible to vote and receives one (1) vote;
    - Every family with children confirmed as pre-registered for the next school year is eligible to vote and receives one (1) vote;

- Families of students with children only in Grade 7 or 8 in the current year are not eligible to vote. In the event that a school uniform is adopted for the following school year, Grade 8 students in the initial year of implementation are encouraged to wear the school uniform, but compliance is not compulsory.
- vii. Ballots shall be numbered and distributed to each eligible family. Each eligible family will receive one ballot.
  - viii. Only original ballots will be accepted (no verbal voting). A ballot signed solely by a student will be considered a void ballot.
  - ix. Proxy voting will not be permitted.
  - x. The voting process must not exceed two (2) calendar weeks but cannot be completed sooner than one (1) week after the initial vote occurs. Ballots will be stored at the school for a minimum of three (3) years.
  - xi. The percentage of votes in favour of the proposed change must exceed two-thirds (67%) of all eligible families. Families who do not vote will be counted as a “no” vote.
  - xii. The process for the proposed change should commence no later than November 15th and must be completed by March 31st for implementation in September of the next school year.

#### 3.3.4 School Consolidation or Closure

- a) Schools involved in school consolidation/closure where all, or some, of the schools have previously implemented a school uniform will be required to go through the following process during the transition year (year prior to consolidating):
  - i. A community information meeting.
  - ii. Voting procedures followed as above for all families in the boundaries of the new consolidated school.
  - iii. If the vote decides to implement a school uniform, the existing school uniforms will be honoured for the next three years.
  - iv. In the initial year, Grade 8 students will have the option of wearing the school uniform.
  - v. A logo for the new consolidated school will be determined after the school's name is decided.

#### 3.3.5 New School

- a) A new school will initiate the school uniform implementation process in their first year of existence.

- b) If the vote decides to implement a school uniform, the existing school uniforms from the schools that formed the new school's boundaries will be honoured for the next three years.

#### **4. Sources**

- 4.1 [PPM128 – The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct](#)
- 4.2 [O. Reg. 612/00 – School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees](#)
- 4.3 [Education Act](#)
- 4.4 [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

#### **5. Appendices**

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Initial Letter
- 5.2 Appendix 2 – Initial Survey
- 5.3 Appendix 3 – Survey Results – Not Proceeding
- 5.4 Appendix 4 – Survey Results – Proceeding to Next Step

#### **6. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures**

- 6.1 [Purchasing of Goods and Services Policy \(PO102\)](#)
- 6.2 [Apparel Purchases and Fair Labour Practices Policy \(PO422\)](#)
- 6.3 [Apparel Purchases and Fair Labour Practices Administrative Procedure \(AP422-1\)](#)
- 6.4 [Code of Conduct Policy \(PO610\)](#)
- 6.5 [Code of Conduct Administrative Procedure \(AP610-1\)](#)