



# System Review Notice

---

## **Background Information**

Board policy BP 1404-D “Dress Code” was reviewed by the Policy Standing Committee at their September 20, 2022, meeting and approved for system review.

In an effort to ensure consistent and equitable dress code enforcement at all BWDSB schools, BP 1404-D now provides a standardized dress code that will be implemented board-wide, upon approval. The board’s current policy can be accessed [here](#).

Board policy BP 1404-D is attached and can also be found on the board website ([www.bwdsb.on.ca](http://www.bwdsb.on.ca) → About Us → Policies and Procedures → [Policies Under Review](#)).

## **Feedback**

Feedback must be forwarded to Corporate Services **to the attention of Crystal Myles** ([crystal\\_myles@bwdsb.on.ca](mailto:crystal_myles@bwdsb.on.ca)) **by December 2, 2022**. Your attention to this timeline is appreciated and will ensure that your feedback is included when the policy is referred back to the Policy Standing Committee for final review.

## **Questions to Consider**

When you are preparing your feedback, please consider the following questions:

- Are there any obstacles that might be encountered due to this policy?
- Would you be able to easily follow the processes outlined in this policy?
- Can you identify any gaps in the information provided?

Thank You.

---

Crystal Myles | Corporate Services Officer  
Bluewater District School Board | Box 190 - 351 1st Ave N  
Chesley ON N0G1L0 | 519-363-2014 ext. 2064  
[Crystal\\_Myles@bwdsb.on.ca](mailto:Crystal_Myles@bwdsb.on.ca) | [www.bwdsb.on.ca](http://www.bwdsb.on.ca)  
[@BluewaterDSB](#) on [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Instagram](#)  
***Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow***

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Dress Code</b>		
<b>Date of Issue</b>	November 20, 2001	<b>Related Procedure</b>	
<b>Revision Dates</b>	March 29, 2005; May 19, 2009; February 21, 2012 (rev. Rationale-Strategic Plan); October 18, 2016	<b>Related Forms</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	October 1, 2021	<b>Originator</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>References</b>			
BP 6820-D “Safe and Accepting Schools”; Regulation 612 - School Councils; BP 7520-D “Human Rights”; AP 6822-D “Code of Conduct”; AP 7521-D “Religious Accommodation”; Ontario Human Rights Code; Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; BP 6820-D “Safe and Accepting Schools”; AP 6825-D “Progressive Discipline – Students”			

**1.0 RATIONALE**

- 1.1** Bluewater District School Board policies will support and provide direction necessary to achieve the board’s Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan priorities.
- 1.2** Bluewater District School Board believes that expectations for appropriate dress should align with provincial, and federal legislation, along with board policies, to support safe and respectful learning and working environments that promote student achievement and well-being.

**2.0 POLICY**

- 2.1** Bluewater District School Board believes that:
  - i) students/staff should be treated equitably, regardless of their race, colour, creed, culture, ethnicity, linguistic origin, disability, socio-economic status, age, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, citizenship, immigration status, family status, marital status, body type/size, or any another factor in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC), the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, BP 7520-D “Human Rights”, BP 6303-D “Equity and Inclusive Education, and AP 7521-D “Religious Accommodation”, where applicable;
  - ii) students/staff should be able to dress for school/work without fear of body shaming, bias, or discrimination;
  - iii) individuals are responsible for managing their own personal biases and/or perspectives/opinions related to others’ choices of clothing; and
  - iv) a student dress code must be implemented with every student in mind, resulting in barrier-free access to the fullest extent possible. The standard design and application of the student dress code must be flexible enough to account for the diversity, accessibility, safety, and dignity of all students.
- 2.2** The Bluewater District School Board dress code is based on the above-noted beliefs, in addition to the system expectations noted in section 3.0.

**3.0 SYSTEM EXPECTATIONS****3.1 Student Dress Code**

Students must wear clothing, accessories, and shoes that are suitable for school and school-related activities, or events, and that meet the following expectations.

**3.1.1 Dress will:**

- i) comply with health and safety requirements for the intended activity, including appropriate footwear (e.g., physical education classes, swimming classes, science classes, sporting events, technical education, etc.);
- ii) respect the board's intent to sustain a community that is positive, anti-oppressive, equitable, accepting, and inclusive of a diverse range of social and cultural identities;
- iii) not promote content that can reasonably be interpreted to be discriminatory, defamatory, threatening, lewd, vulgar, obscene, promoting hate, profanity, pornography, or any other content that disrupts the learning environment;
- iv) not refer to tobacco, cannabis, alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia, promotion or incitement of violence, any illegal conduct, or criminal activities; and
- v) not interfere with the safe operation of the school.

3.1.2 Clothing will be worn in such a way to cover groin area, breasts, and buttocks with opaque fabric.

3.1.3 Tops may expose shoulders, midriff, and neck lines.

3.1.4 Bottoms may expose legs, thighs, and hips.

3.1.5 Undergarments cannot be used as outerwear and, if worn, should be worn beneath a layer of outerwear. Undergarments cannot be visible (straps and waistbands may be exposed).

3.1.6 Any headwear that does not obscure the face may be worn (exception – religious observance).

**3.2 Staff Dress Code**

3.2.1 It is the board's expectation that all staff will present themselves at work in an appropriate and professional manner.

**3.3 Communication**

3.3.1 The dress code expectations noted in sections 3.1 and 3.2 will be clearly conveyed to students, parents/guardian, and staff, displayed in schools, posted on the school website, printed in student agendas, and highlighted in announcements, newsletters etc. for clear reminders. Reference to this board policy will also be included in all dress code messaging.

**3.4 Enforcement / Compliance**

3.4.1 To ensure effective and equitable enforcement, staff must be consistent and fair in application of the student dress code and base decisions on objective, verifiable evidence of impact.

3.4.2 Staff will not use subjective discretion to vary the requirements in any ways that lead to discriminatory outcomes, differential treatment or reinforce and/ or increase marginalization or oppression.

- 3.4.3 Student dress code violations that threaten health and safety, and/ or promote violence, illegal activity, bullying, harassment, and/ or are motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate against any individual or identifiable groups, are serious violations of board policy BP 6820-D “Safe and Accepting Schools” and must be responded to in accordance with BP 6820-D and associated procedures.
- 3.4.4 Staff will respond to all other student dress code violations in a manner that:
- i. treats the violation as minor on the continuum of school rule violations;
  - ii. ensures no student is negatively affected by dress code enforcement because of race, colour, creed, culture, ethnicity, linguistic origin, disability, socio-economic status, age, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, citizenship, immigration status, family status, marital status, body type/size, or any another factor in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC), the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, BP 7520-D “Human Rights”, BP 6303-D “Equity and Inclusive Education, and AP 7521-D “Religious Accommodation”, where applicable;
  - iii. does not require the removal of students from a classroom or a loss of class time as a disciplinary consequence; and
  - iv. offers a continuum of choices to remedy any inappropriate dress, such as:
    1. asking the student to wear additional clothing of their own to obscure the inappropriate dress choice;
    2. allowing the student to seek out and borrow additional clothing from a peer;
    3. allowing the student to contact parent or guardian to bring extra clothes;
    4. allowing the student to wear clothing provided by the school.
- 3.4.5 Students who refuse to comply with choices provided to remedy inappropriate dress and/ or who repeatedly violate the student dress code may be subject to progressive discipline under BP 6820-D “Safe and Accepting Schools” and its related procedure AP 6825-D “Progressive Discipline – Students”.
- 3.5 Concerns**
- 3.5.1 Students are encouraged to speak with appropriate staff (e.g., their teacher, school administrator) regarding any dress code concerns.
- 3.5.2 Parents/guardians will follow AP 1604-D “Communications – Addressing Parent/Community Concerns” to address any concerns related to dress code enforcement.