

Policy 504 STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE

I. PURPOSE

In alignment with the district's vision to prepare every student for lifelong success, the purpose of this policy is to establish expectations of dress and appearance that support and enhance the educational process of the Northfield School District.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Dressing appropriately for school activities is the joint responsibility of the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).
- B. Appropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Clothing appropriate for the weather.
 - 2. Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard.
 - 3. Clothing appropriate for the activity (i.e., physical education or the classroom).
 - 4. Footwear that does not present a safety hazard.
- C. Hair or hairstyles choices are at the discretion of the individual student. This includes but is not limited to hair texture and hair styles such as braids, locks, and twists.
- D. The district must not prohibit an American Indian student from wearing American Indian regalia, Tribal regalia, or objects of cultural significance at a graduation ceremony.
- E. Clothing that cannot be worn includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Clothing bearing a message that is lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory, profane, sexually explicit or discriminatory.
 - 2. Apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors.
 - 3. Emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects or pictures on clothing or jewelry communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, evidences gang membership or affiliation, or approves, advances or provokes any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals as defined in [Policy 413](#).
 - 4. Dress or appearance that interferes with the educational environment of the school or the classroom.
 - 5. Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property.
- F. Head coverings may be worn for religious or cultural reasons or with administrative permission. Other uses of headgear, including hats or head

coverings, are governed by the school handbooks and [Student Citizenship Handbook](#).

- G. The intention of this policy is not to abridge the rights of students to express political, religious, philosophical, or similar opinions by wearing apparel on which such messages are stated. Such messages are acceptable as long as they are not lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory, profane, do not advocate violence or harassment against others, or create a disruption in the school environment.
- H. “Gang,” as defined in this policy, means any ongoing organization, association or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of one or more criminal acts, which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or whose members engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity. “Pattern of gang activity” means the commission, attempt to commit, conspiring to commit, or solicitation of two or more criminal acts, provided the criminal acts were committed on separate dates or by two or more persons who are members of or belong to the same criminal street gang.

Policy 504 Student Dress and Appearance

Adopted: 02.26.2007; Updated 12.2013, 05.23.2022, 08.14.2023; 10.27.2025

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References:

U. S. Const., amend. I
Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503, 89 S.Ct. 733, 21 L.Ed.2d 731 (1969)
Stephenson v. Davenport Community School District, 110 F.3d 1303 (8th Cir. 1997)
B.H. ex rel. Hawk v. Easton Area School Dist., 725 F.3d 293 (3rd Cir. 2013)
D.B. ex rel. Brogdon v. Lafon, 217 Fed. Appx. 518 (6th Cir. 2007)
Hardwick v. Heyward, 711 F.3d 426 (4th Cir.2013)
B.W.A. v. Farmington R-7 Sch. Dist., 554 F. 3d 734 (8th Cir. 2009)
Madrid v. Anthony, 510 F. Supp.2d 425 (S.D. Tex. 2007)
Lowry v. Watson Chapel Sch. Dist., 540 F.3d 752 (8th Cir. 2008)
Hicks v. Halifax County Board of Educ., 93 F.Supp.2d 649 (E.D.N.C. 1999)
McIntire v. Bethel School, I.S.D. No. 3, 804 F. Supp. 1415 (W.D. Okla. 1992)
Olesen v. Board of Educ. of Sch. Dist. No. 228, 676 F. Supp. 820, (N.D. Ill. 1987)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.792 (Graduation Ceremonies; Tribal Regalia and Objects of Cultural Significance)
Minn. Stat. § 363A.03, Subd. 36a (Definitions)

Cross References:

Board Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
Board Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
Board Policy 525 (Violence Prevention)