

Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board

Student Dress Guidelines

Introduction

The Student Dress Policy is guided by legislation from the Government of Ontario and the Human Rights Commission of Ontario. In consultation with our Catholic School Community Councils and Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, each school develops dress guidelines for students.

Purpose

Using this policy as a guide, all schools in the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board (SMCDSB) will develop guidelines for student dress. Student attire should align with SMCDSB's mission, vision and values and reflect a commitment to equity and inclusion.

It is important to acknowledge that in the past, dress policies have disproportionately impacted marginalized students and promoted biases, stereotypes, and discrimination. Standards and practices must be student-centred and inclusive. Student dress guidelines will be fair and equitable for all students, regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, or sexual orientation.

Goals

Safe and Welcoming

Ensure our schools are safe, welcoming, and respectful by setting fair, equitable, and inclusive standards for student dress

Student Expression

Encourage students to express themselves while maintaining a respectful, safe, and positive school environment

Focus on Learning

Allow schools to concentrate on teaching and learning without focusing excessively on dress code violations

Respect and Dignity

Support a learning environment that respects the dignity of all students

Awareness and Understanding

Promote awareness of biases and stereotypes to prevent discriminatory practices.

Inclusivity and Equity

Ensure dress policies do not marginalize or oppress any student based on their identity or background

Adaptable

Ensure dress policies are adaptable to meet the unique needs of students.

Student Dress Guidelines

Student dress guidelines apply to clothing, footwear, headwear, jewellery, and accessories.

Secondary Uniform

SMCDSB secondary students have a standard uniform, which is developed through consultation with the Catholic School Community Council and school community. The uniform supplier makes specified clothing available to students.

All SMCDSB students must adhere to the following dress guidelines:

- Footwear must be worn at all times
- Clothing and accessories must not contain logos, sayings, slogans or images that include sexual content, reference to substance use/abuse, violence, profanity, discrimination or promote gang affiliation
- Clothing or accessories cannot be worn in a way that conceals identity

Addressing Student Dress Concerns

Schools should handle student dress concerns in a fair, sensitive, consistent and respectful way. Student dignity and privacy must be maintained at all times.

SMCDSB encourages schools to foster positive behaviour through awareness, intervention, strategies and supportive measures.

When addressing concerns, educators must be objective in order to avoid discriminatory outcomes or differential treatment. Corrective actions should not become a barrier to school attendance or a student's ability to fully participate in school activities.

Any dress that threatens health and safety, promotes violence or illegal activities, or is motivated by bias or hate must be addressed promptly.

Accommodations

Schools will encourage students to follow dress guidelines. However, there may be instances where accommodations are considered. Principals will consider requests for exceptions to the dress guidelines based on religious beliefs, disabilities, or other special circumstances covered by the Human Rights Code and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

These requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with the student and their parents or guardians.

Shared Accountability and Responsibility

SMCDSB

Sets the standards for dress policies to promote safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environments. The Board also provides recommendations to identify and remove systemic barriers in dress policies.

Parents/Guardians

Ensure their children understand and comply with school's dress expectations. Parental involvement is essential to the success of dress guidelines.

Students

Follow the student dress guidelines and expectations.

School Principals

Develop and implement school dress policies that promote respect of self and others as an addition to this statement. While consulting with the Catholic School Community Council to respect religious beliefs, disabilities, or other special circumstances.

School Staff/Educators:

Support consistent and fair approach to dress policies to maintain a safe and productive learning environment.

