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Kuss Middle School
SCHOOL SPIRIT WEAR POLICY AND PROCEDURES
2009-2010 School Year

STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the policy of Kuss Middle School that all students in grades 6, 7, and 8 will wear school Spirit Wear. All students at Kuss Middle School are expected to dress in a manner that will show respect for themselves as well as others. Therefore, dress, manners, general grooming and conduct of students will be consistent with the highest possible standards. School Spirit Wear is limited to the required clothing adopted by the Fall River School Committee in 2009. The policy becomes effective beginning with the 2009-2010 academic year.

A. Parent/Guardian Notification

Kuss Middle School must notify current and incoming parents/guardians and students of the policy and required procedures in writing for the upcoming year.

B. School Spirit Wear Selection Guidelines

1. Spirit Wear will comply in all respects with the provisions of the FRPS District Dress Code Policy found in the Fall River Public Schools *Policy Handbook* for parents.
2. The selected Spirit Wear will be appropriate to the school setting and reasonably relate to safety, modesty, hygiene, discipline and neatness.
3. Spirit Wear will represent, in part the Kuss Middle School - school colors - royal blue and white, as clearly defined in the School Spirit Wear Guidelines (Addendum 1).
4. Spirit Wear that includes oxford shirts, polo shirts, t-shirts, sweaters and sweatshirts with the official school logo may be purchased by the PTO vendor. Pants, shorts, capris, skirts, belts, socks and shoes may be purchased from a retailer of parent/guardian choice, following the prescribed guidelines in Addendum 1.

C. Duties of the School Principal

1. School personnel should ensure that all students adhere to the School Spirit Wear Policy, and refer to the office any students who are not in compliance.
2. Evaluate and report on the quality, value and service of product provided by the supplier.

3. Ensure that all students and parents are provided with a copy of the policy, procedures and guidelines.
4. Administer the program.
5. Monitor the School Spirit Wear Policy on an annual basis and make proposals for changes, if and when needed.

D. Duties of the Parent/Guardian

1. Provide students with clothing and accessories that comply with the program.
2. Ensure that their child arrives to school in a clean school Spirit Wear each day.
3. Inform the school Principal when circumstances prevent the ongoing compliance with the program.

E. Duties of the Student

1. Arrive to school each day in the appropriate school Spirit Wear.
2. Remain in his/her school Spirit Wear all day, except when requested to modify by school staff.
3. Have an appropriate change of clothing for Physical Education classes.
4. Provide the school Principal with a note from his/her parent/guardian when he/she is unable to comply with his/her ongoing responsibilities.

F. Compliance

1. All students are required to adhere to the School Spirit Wear Policy, procedures and guidelines (Addendum 1). Kuss Middle School will strive to achieve full compliance once the school's rationale and benefits of the School Spirit Wear Policy is explained and fully understood by the student body and his/her family. Students observed to be out of compliance with the School Spirit Wear Policy shall be subject to the following procedures:
 - a. 1st & 2nd Offense:
 - a. Shirt - School will loan a shirt (to be worn over existing shirt) to wear during the day. It will be returned at the end of the day.
 - b. Other - A student without the proper pants, knee length shorts, capris, skirt, or shoes will be cited.
 - c. In either case above, a note will be sent home for parent signature and return, stating the failure of compliance. The student is expected to return in the proper Spirit Wear the next day.
 - b. 3rd OFFENSE: Meeting with parent will be required regarding reason for not adhering to the policy, and to arrive at a solution.
 - c. At the principal's discretion, attendance to special programs and activities may be forfeited or withheld if the student is out of compliance with the School Spirit Wear Policy, procedures and/or guidelines. In addition, the student may be directed to have lunch in an area designated by the principal.

2. No student will be considered non-compliant with the School Spirit Wear Policy in the following instances:
 - a. Creates financial hardship.
 - b. Violates religious or political beliefs or health needs. In these cases if a bona fide conflict exists, the school will provide reasonable accommodation. Any student desiring accommodation will notify the principal in writing with the factual basis for the request. Approved coverings worn as part of a student's bona fide religious practices or beliefs will be permitted under this policy. Any student who believes the school has not provided reasonable accommodation for his/her religious, political, health, financial needs may submit to the principal a written objection, on his/her own or through his/her parents/guardians. The principal or designee will meet with the student and parent/guardian to resolve any concerns as soon as possible within 14 days of the date the written objection is received. Any student/parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the principal's/designee's response may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent.
 - c. Conflicts with the wearing of a nationally recognized youth organization such as Boy Scouts or Girls Scouts on regular meeting days.
 - d. A student's parent/guardian has secured an exemption from the School Spirit Wear Policy.
 - e. An appeal of an exemption is pending under the described School Spirit Wear Policy.
 - f. Within the first 15 school days after transferring from another school in FRPS or from outside the district. The parent/guardian will be notified of the policy and effective compliance date on the student's first day of transfer. During the 15-day grace period, the student will be encouraged to adhere to the policy but will not be disciplined for failure to do so. Following the grace period, the student will be subject to discipline for non-compliance.
 - g. A student is on campus outside of normal school hours.
 - h. A student or group of students have been granted a special dress day (see below).
3. The school principal has discretion on special occasions to allow students/student Organizations to have special dress days. An *Application for Students to Wear Class, Club or Athletic Wear* (Form 3) will be used when a request is made for dress on special occasions.

G. Financial Hardship

It is the policy of Kuss Middle School that no student will be denied an education due to bona fide financial inability to obtain clothing that complies with the School Spirit Wear Policy. Any student for whom compliance with School Spirit Wear Policy and procedures poses a bona fide financial hardship may submit a written request for clothing assistance to the principal, specifying the clothing needed along with a statement of financial need. The Principal and/or designees will assist families in financial need to obtain clothing that complies with the policy. In meeting requests for assistance, the principal or designee shall seek the help of community resources, parent organizations and/or charitable organizations.

H. Exemptions

The School Spirit Wear Policy of Kuss Middle School is not aimed at the promotion or restriction of any particular student's, parent's/guardian's exercise of their Constitutional Rights, but is intended for the benefit of all students to promote a safe and affirming atmosphere at Kuss Middle School.

1. Parents/guardians may request an exemption from the School Spirit Wear Policy by submitting a written request to the school principal on the *Application for Exemption Form* (Form 1) within at least ten (10) school days prior to the first day of school, or from the date that the student is initially enrolled in Kuss Middle. Exemptions may be granted for religious reasons, financial hardship or other justifiable reasons.
2. The principal or designee must meet with the parents/guardians within five (5) school days from receipt of the application to discuss the request for exemption. The meeting shall include:
 - a. assurance that parents/guardians understand the purpose and intent of the School Spirit Wear Policy;
 - b. verification of the accuracy of the information on the *Application for Exemption*.
3. The parents/guardians will be notified by the principal in writing within three (3) school days after the meeting (Form 2).
4. If an exemption is not approved, the parent/guardian may appeal in writing to the Superintendent within five (5) school days of the principal's decision. If the Superintendent upholds the decision, the parent/guardian may appeal in writing to the School Committee within five (5) school days of the Superintendent's decision, requesting the Committee's review. The Committee may schedule a hearing on the appeal, and its decision is final.

I. Annual Evaluation

In a continuing effort to measure the effectiveness of the School Spirit Wear Policy, the principal and respective staff will conduct an *Annual Spirit Wear Evaluation* (Form 4) of the policy by May 1st of each year (effective 5/1/10). Through the annual evaluation process, the opportunity will exist to address concerns relative to the policy and its implementation, with the feedback and input of parents, staff and students throughout the year.

School Spirit Wear Guidelines

Spirit Wear that includes oxford shirts, polo shirts, t-shirts, sweaters and sweatshirts with the official school logo may be purchased by the PTO vendor. Pants, shorts, capris, skirts, belts, socks and shoes may be purchased from a retailer of parent/guardian choice.

Boys:

Pants: khaki or navy blue slacks; must be appropriate size, no holes, no tears. No blue jeans, no cargo, no saggy pants.

Shorts: khaki or navy blue. No cut-offs.

Shirts: oxford or button down, white or royal blue. Long or short sleeves.

T-shirts: white or royal blue. Clean, plain, no insignias, no holes, no tears.

Under shirts: white only.

Polo shirts with collars only: white or royal blue, long or short sleeves.

Shoes: white, black or brown athletic shoes or sneakers, dress shoes. Appropriate laces - same color as shoes or sneakers. No sandals, no boots.

Sweatshirts: Must have a full zipper in white, grey or royal blue. Plain, no insignias.

Socks: white, black, brown, tan.

Belts: black, navy – small buckles only

Outer wear: No restrictions on color or material.

See other restrictions and prohibited clothing and items below.

Girls:

Pants: khaki or navy blue slacks; must be appropriate size, no hip huggers, no holes, no tears. No blue jeans.

Shorts: khaki or navy blue. No cut-offs. Length must be as long as fingertips when arms are by sides.

Shirts: Oxford or button down, white. Long or short sleeves.

T-shirts: white or royal blue, clean, plain, no insignias, no holes, no tears. under shirts: white only.

Skirts: khaki or navy blue, no denim, satin, see-through or stretchy, skin tight fabrics.

Blouses: white or royal blue. No denim, satin, see-through or stretchy, skin-tight fabrics.

Shoes: white, black or brown athletic shoes or sneakers, dress shoes. Appropriate laces - same color as shoes or sneakers. No sandals, no open-toed, no backless shoes, no boots.

Sweatshirts: white, grey or royal blue. Plain, no insignias.

Socks: white, black, brown, tan.

Belts: black, navy – small buckles only

Outer wear: No restrictions on color or material.

See other restrictions and prohibited clothing and items below.

In order to maintain an environment that is safe and conducive to the educational process, Kuss Middle School prohibits the following during regular school hours:

- a. Attire or accessories that contain messages or images that would be offensive or disruptive to the educational process, including racist or sexist messages or images; messages or images promoting the use of drugs, alcohol, firearms or tobacco; profane or pornographic messages or images; messages that incite violence or constitute "fighting words;" or attire or accessories that promote or signify gang affiliation.
- b. See-through clothing, pajamas, nightwear, clothing revealing midriffs, tank tops, halter tops, tube tops, undershirts or underpants worn as outer garments, clothing with plunging necklines (front or back), sleeveless shirts, exposed clothing made of spandex material, or clothing such as low riders worn in such a manner as to expose undergarments.
- c. Bare feet, bedroom slippers, shower style flip flops, opened toe shoes, high heels over one inch, roller blades, roller skates, sneakers with wheels in the heel, British Knight sneakers, or any footwear that mars floors, causes excessive noise, or creates a safety hazard.
- d. Head coverings of any kind, including but not limited to scarves, bandanas, curlers, masks, headbands, visors, kerchiefs, athletic sweatbands, hats, caps, earmuffs or hoods. Head coverings will not be worn, carried, hung on belts or around the neck or kept in the classroom.
- e. Spiked or studded bracelets, belts, oversized or multi-finger rings, large or oversized belts or chains or ornaments worn around the waist, neck or wrists, dog tags or any other articles or attire with spikes or studs attached. Name or oversized metal belt buckles, or any other items of clothing or jewelry that may present a safety hazard to the student or other students or staff members.
- f. Coats, jackets, windbreakers, nylon pullovers, down vests, hooded sweatshirts with zippers, fleece jackets or other attire normally worn as outerwear. Such outerwear will not be worn on the student's person or draped or tied around the waist, carried or kept in the classroom.
- g. Outerwear must be secured in the student's locker before the start of the school day. The only authorized extra wear for winter warmth during the school day will be Spirit Wear sweatshirts or sweaters.