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Dear Parent / Guardian,

On June 11, 2009, the Caruthersville Board of Education voted to adopt a mandatory school uniform policy for all students attending Caruthersville School District. During the first semester of the 2009-2010 school year, students may opt to wear the required uniform or to follow the adopted dress code policy. On January 5, the beginning of the second semester, students must be in the required uniform.

The intent of the Board of Education is not to infringe upon the right of any individual, but rather to promote a safe and disciplined learning environment, so that all students can receive the quality education they deserve. While there are differences in opinion regarding mandatory school uniforms, research indicates that students who feel safe and secure, who learn basic values and essentials of good citizenship, and who feel a sense of personal pride, will be better students. Schools who have adopted school uniforms express that benefits include:

- Decreasing violence and theft among students over designer clothing or expensive sneakers
- Helping prevent gang members from wearing gang colors and insignia at school
- Instilling students with discipline and self-respect
- Improving student self pride and school pride
- Helping parents and students resist peer pressure
- Helping students concentrate on their school work
- Helping school officials recognize intruders who come to school
- Creating an orderly setting in which work can be accomplished by adults and students

Staff members are not expected to wear the school uniform. However, staff members will be expected to demonstrate by example by arriving at school each day in professional attire and exhibiting a wholesome attitude toward neatness, cleanliness, propriety, modesty, and good sense in attire and appearance.

The Board of Education and administration ask for your help and support of this initiative. Parents / guardians are asked to take responsibility for their children's dress. By working together, parents, administrators, and staff can continue to make a positive difference in our schools, by promoting the District's vision of excellence with a focus on learning.

Sincerely,

Ms. J. J. Bullington  
Superintendent of Schools

**Caruthersville Public Schools School Uniform Policy**  
**2009-2010**  
**(Effective January 5, 2010)**  
**(Adopted by the Board of Education on June 11, 2009)**

Caruthersville Public Schools must be an environment in which work can be accomplished by adults and students. All students are required to arrive at school each day well groomed, and neatly dressed in a mandatory uniform. It is not the intent of the Board of Education to dictate fashion nor to limit individual freedom of expression; but rather to establish a school climate that focuses on order and academic pursuits.

The students' dress will fall within the following guidelines in order to create an orderly setting in which teaching and learning can occur without distraction. The school administrator will make the final decision about whether an article or style of dress falls outside these guidelines.

New students transferring into the school system will have five school days to be in uniform. Building administration will handle transfers on a case by case basis.

Appropriate school day dress for all students will be:

### **Shirts**

- Cotton / knit shirt with two or three buttons, or a full button up long-sleeved oxford style shirt of red, white, or navy blue, with a collar. Long-sleeved oxford style shirts may be red, white, navy or light blue. Shirts may be short-sleeved or long-sleeved, but may not be sleeveless. Shirts should be designed to be buttoned to the neck. Only the top button may remain unfastened. Turtle-neck or mock turtle-neck shirts cannot be worn alone but may be worn as an undergarment. T-shirts may be worn beneath the polo shirt, but must be solid white with no words, pictures, or emblems on them.
- Shirts should be tucked in at all times.
- Shirts should be sized to fit, neither skin tight or oversized.
- Shirts should have no visible design, printing, or logo, other than an approved school logo.
- Shirts should have no holes or tears.

### **Pants**

- Slacks must be of a solid color in either khaki, navy blue, or black. Slacks may be either cuffed or uncuffed.
- Cargo style pants are not acceptable.
- Jeans, denim, stretch material, and corduroy are not allowed.
- Pants must be worn at waist level. Low-rider style pants are not acceptable.
- Pants should have no embroidery, sequins, beads, appliqués, patches, or other decorations.
- Pants should have no holes, tears, or shredded hemlines.
- Pants should be sized-to-fit, neither skintight, oversized, sagging, nor dragging the ground.
- Capris are acceptable in the above listed colors.
- Shorts of the above listed colors may be worn. Shorts must be of knee-length when standing. Cargo style shorts are not acceptable.
- No sweatpants, wind pants, or pajama pants are allowed.

- Pants may be beltless style or have belt loops. Belts must be worn with pants that have belt loops. Belts must be of a solid color. Pants must be worn at the waist.

### **Skirts, Dresses, Jumpers**

- Skirts, skorts, jumpers, and dresses must be of solid color, khaki, navy blue, black, or school approved plaid, with collar and sleeves. Sleeveless jumpers must have a school approved shirt worn underneath.
- Hemlines must be knee length when standing.
- Leggings / tights will be allowed, but the skirt which is worn over the leggings must be knee length when standing. Leggings / tights must be solid in color in natural, navy, white, black, or brown.

### **Outer Garments**

- Solid color sweatshirts or pullovers of khaki, navy blue, red, white, without hoods, are allowed. They are not required to be tucked in, but must be sized-to-fit and no longer than mid-hip.
- Solid color cardigans of khaki, navy, red, and white, without hoods, are allowed. They are not required to be tucked in, but must be no longer than mid-hip level.
- Vests may be worn over the acceptable style shirt, but fall no longer than mid-hip.

### **Shoes**

- Shoes may be slip-on or lace-up. For safety reasons, shoes must be laced, tied, strapped, or hooked. Shoes must be closed-toe and be either sneaker or hard-sole style. Shoe laces must be the predominant color of the shoe.
- House shoes, steel-toed boots, and flip-flops are not permitted.
- For safety reasons, heel height is limited to 1 ½ “.
- Socks must be a solid color of white, black, navy, or brown.

### **Spirit Wear**

- The building administration may designate days as “School Spirit Days”. During these days, allowances for standard dress may be amended. However, the guidelines regarding neatness, safety and modes of apparel will be adhered to on these days.

### **Physical Education Dress Code**

- Students in physical education classes must wear appropriate length red or black shorts, skirts, skorts, or athletic pants. Students must wear a red, gray, or white color t-shirt with sleeves. All criteria of the school dress code will apply to attire worn during physical education classes. Students in grades K-6 are not required to dress out for physical education.

### **Student Athletes**

- Student athletes must be dressed in the appropriate school uniform when representing the District. Athletic uniforms must be worn appropriately at all times. Athletes may not wear uniforms in a manner inconsistent with the school policy.

## **Jewelry**

- Large belt buckles may not be worn. (Discretion of administration).
- Long chains, beads, key chains, or other objects may not hang from belts, clothing, or be worn as jewelry. (Discretion of administration).
- No items with spikes or sharp objects.

### **The following clothing items are examples of inappropriate clothing at anytime.**

- Clothing with low-cut neckline or clothing that exposes midriffs or backs.
- See-through clothing.
- Sleepwear
- Coats, jackets, hooded clothing, shawls, and ponchos cannot be worn in the school building or classroom. Middle School students and elementary students with lockers must place coats in their lockers during the school day. Elementary students without lockers must remove coats and hoods in the classroom.
- Hats, bandanas, head scarves, sweatbands, stocking caps, hair racks / combs, hair rollers, rakes, doo-rags, grills, sunglasses, and other distracting apparel cannot be worn on the school campus.

### **While not considered student dress, the following can cause distraction to the normal educational process and will not be allowed**

- Visible body piercings will not be allowed, except for traditional pierced earlobes for ornamental earrings.
- Hair cuts, hairstyles, or hair color that is non-traditional to the point of causing distractions are not allowed.
- Fingernails that are excessively long are not allowed.

It is not possible to compile an exhaustive list of all clothing items that are acceptable and unacceptable. As is true with any policy or procedure, reasonable judgment must be used in implementing and administering the policy. The building administration or designee has the authority to determine if any attire is improper and interferes with the teaching-learning process or is prejudicial to good order at school.

### **Right to “Opt Out”**

A student may “opt out” of compliance with the mandatory uniform policy in the following situations:

- A religious exemption can be based on the religion of the parent or the religion of the student, but the parent must apply for the exemption in either case.
- A medical exemption can be based on the medical needs of the student, but the parent must apply for the exemption. A medical condition that prevents a student from coming into contact with the materials contained in the school uniform will be allowed to wear a uniform of alternative materials or non-uniform clothing upon presentation of proper medical documentation approved by the Superintendent of the school district.
- All requests for exemptions must be filed with the building principal.

## **Compliance**

Enforcement of the mandatory uniform policy starts with each parent and student exercising responsibility and good judgment. All professional staff members have the obligation of reporting uniform policy violations. Each violation shall be documented.

### **First Violation**

- The school shall attempt to call the student's parent or guardian to determine whether the student has standard clothing. If the student has standard clothing, the school will request that the parent bring the clothing to school. If the parent cannot be reached or cannot provide standard clothing, the student will be placed in in-school suspension(I.S.S.) for the remainder of the day. The violation will be documented and placed in the student's file.

### **Second Violation**

- The school will attempt to contact the parent to inform the parent that the child is being placed in in-school suspension (I.S.S.) for one day and to discuss further consequences for continued violation. If the parent is unable to be contacted by phone, the parent will be notified in writing of the violation. A copy of the violation and notice will be placed in the student's file.

### **Third Violation**

- The student will be placed in in-school suspension (I.S.S.) until the parent comes to school to discuss the school dress code / uniform policy and compliance of such. If the parent is unable to be contacted by phone, the parent will be notified in writing of the violation. A copy of the violation and notice will be placed in the student's file. If a parent has not responded within 3 days, a referral will be made to the school social worker and resource officer.

### **Fourth Violation**

- The student will be sent home for the remainder of the day and will only be allowed to return when dressed in compliance with school policy. Upon the fourth violation of the mandatory uniform policy, the student will be removed from participating in any club, activity, or team for the remainder of the school year. A copy of the violation and notice will be placed in the student's file.
- Once the student has been removed from all activities as a result of repeated violations of the mandatory uniform policy, the parent will have one opportunity to have the child reinstated by meeting with the building administration. The parent must schedule a meeting with the school administration. At the meeting of the parent, student, and administration, the parent and student will be asked to sign an agreement indicating that they clearly understand the mandatory uniform policy and agree to comply with the policy. Once the agreement has been signed and the student begins wearing the mandatory uniform, the student will be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities. Upon any additional violation, the student will be removed from participation in extracurricular activities for the remainder of the year.

## **Continued Violations**

- The student will be suspended for no less than one full day and only allowed to return after a parent/student/administrator conference. Continued violations will result in more severe disciplinary action as deemed necessary. A copy of the violation and notice will be placed in the student's file.

It should be clearly understood that the District's desire is for students to be in school every day and dressed appropriately. It is not the desire of the District to suspend students. However, students must be dressed in compliance with the dress code / uniform policy to be in attendance at school.

## **Caruthersville Public Schools Faculty and Staff Dress Code**

The faculty and staff of Caruthersville Public Schools are expected to dress in a way that brings credibility and a professional image to the profession and to the District. Staff members shall demonstrate by example and precept wholesome attitudes toward neatness, cleanliness, propriety, modesty, and good sense in attire and appearance.

Professional dress on a regular school day is business casual. Professional dress DOES NOT include t-shirts, jeans, shorts, wind suits, sweat suits, or sweat type clothing etc. Physical Education teachers may wear athletic style clothing. However, sweat pants and t-shirts are not acceptable. Revealing clothing is considered inappropriate. Clothes should be sized-to-fit, not too tight or see-through.

The administration will make exceptions to these professional dress guidelines for special events, field trips, etc.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

The following is a zero tolerance for ALL spectators and fans attending Caruthersville Public Schools activities. Individuals who are out of compliance will not be allowed to enter the activity:

- Appropriate length shirts, shorts, and skirts, not excessively long or too short.
- Sagging and excessively baggy pants will not be allowed. Pants must be worn at the waist.
- Clothing with profanity, abusive language, references to alcohol or drugs, will not be allowed.
- Doo-rags and stocking caps are not allowed.
- No see-through clothing allowed.
- Midriff, cleavage, backs, etc. must not be exposed.
- No smoking on school property.

## **Availability**

A list of merchants handling school uniforms will be provided. However, clothing may be purchased at any location as long as the clothing meets the requirements of the adopted uniform policy.

**Final Revisions: 6-19-09**

