

## STUDENTS

**Student Uniforms - R 7-33.3**

Students enrolled in the Fort Hill Community School, Linkhorne Middle School, William Marvin Bass Elementary School, Heritage Elementary School, Perrymont Elementary School, Sandusky Elementary School, and Sheffield Elementary School shall participate in school uniform programs.

**A. Rationale**

The Lynchburg City School Board believes that school uniforms will affect positive change in schools, particularly by:

1. reducing peer pressure
2. increasing safety and security
3. eliminating the wearing of inappropriate clothing items
4. improving personal responsibility and accountability
5. preparing for the workplace, and
6. reinforcing positive behavior.

**B. Procedures**

1. The school division will provide school uniforms for students who attend Amelia Pride's eighth grade program and the Middle School Learning Center. The Lynchburg City Schools will provide each student three sets of uniforms consisting of the following clothing items.
  - a. long sleeve or short sleeve blue polo shirts
  - b. khaki slacks or khaki skirts
2. It will be parents' responsibilities to provide school uniforms for students at all other school sites.
3. The principal of a school wanting to implement a school uniform program shall collaborate with his/her school leadership, PTA/PTO, and parents to decide, develop and publish school uniform requirements relative to styles and colors of clothing.
  - a. In developing these requirements, principals shall take into consideration the availability, affordability, and practicality of the selection.
  - b. The school uniform shall not prohibit students from wearing coats, jackets, sweaters, or other appropriate outer garments when necessary due to weather conditions or for other legitimate reasons, as long as the apparel conforms to the dress code.
4. Principals shall allow exceptions to the school uniform code when:

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- a. A student wears a uniform of a nationally recognized youth organization, such as the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, on regular meeting days.
- b. A student wears special clothing or costumes necessary for a school play or a performance.
- c. A student adds a button, armband, etc. to exercise free speech guaranteed by the United States Constitution, unless the button, armband, etc., is related to gangs, gang membership, or gang activity or would violate the school division's dress code policy as long as the item does not violate the integrity of the uniform program or disrupt the school environment.
- d. The wearing of the school uniform violates a student's sincerely held religious beliefs. With verification of those sincerely held religious beliefs, the student may use the opt-out exemption. The wearing of religious head coverings, such as yarmulkas, does not violate the school uniform policy.

C. Financial Considerations

Principals shall develop procedures and criteria to offer assistance to students who experience difficulties complying with the school uniform program. Principals shall develop programs that donate clothing, financial assistance, or both to alleviate financial difficulties for needy families.

D. Annual Opt-Out, Exemptions and Procedures

1. Any student, who, together with his/her parent/guardian, by reason of bona fide religious belief is conscientiously opposed to wearing the school uniform may request an exemption. To apply for the exemption, the student and his/her parent/guardian must:
  - a. Submit a written request to the principal at the beginning of the academic year or within thirty (30) days following the first day of school or the student's first day of school.
  - b. Meet with the principal or his/her designee to discuss, at the minimum, the school uniform program, the reason(s) for the waiver request, the nature of the parents'/guardians' objections(s), and the accuracy of the information in the request.
2. If the principal or his designee approves the parent's/guardian's request, he/she shall grant the waiver and note the exemption on the parent's/guardian's

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application. The principal shall then place a copy of the approved request in the child's cumulative file or in a file designated for this purpose. If the principal grants the exemption, the student shall be subject to transfer to another school. The superintendent or his designee, using factors such as proximity, enrollment, available space, curriculum, academic program, and/or availability of special education services/programs, shall determine that placement.

3. If the principal grants an exemption, that exemption shall remain in effect for that school year only.

E. New Students

Students entering Linkhorne Middle School, William Marvin Bass Elementary School, Heritage Elementary School, Perrymont Elementary School, Sandusky Elementary School, Sheffield Elementary School, and the Homebound Learning Center during the school year shall have a grace period of thirty (30) days before being required to comply with the school's uniform program.

F. Violation of the Policy/Regulation

Willful violation of the school uniform policy will subject the student to disciplinary action by the school's administrators. These progressive disciplinary actions may include phone calls to parents for the first violation to various in-school actions to suspension from school for continued willful violations.

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