

SunRidge School Expectation for Student Dress

(revised and Charter Council approved January 2023)

SunRidge School strives to offer an educational environment that promotes academic achievement while it serves the healthy social and emotional development of every child. We believe it is important that the clothing of our students support this purpose and does not distract from it. A dress code should also be simple enough for everyone to understand and remember, so that both following and enforcing it are relatively easy.

SunRidge School expects that students come to school dressed in a manner that allows for and encourages active participation in the entire school day, including a large variety of activities (games, gardening, woodworking, handwork, painting, etc), and strives to minimize distractions that do not support the learning environment or run counter to the values we are striving to develop.

The weather in our area varies considerably from early morning to late afternoon and children should come to school dressed for that variety. Except on the warmest days, every child should have several layers of clothing, including a warm sweater or coat, so that they can keep themselves warm when outdoors and remove layers as the temperature rises. All students should also have rain gear for rainy days. We allow outside play even when there's light rain if a child has proper protection (weatherproof coat, boots, and hood or hat).

While individuality and uniqueness and clothing can be a positive form of self-expression in a school, clothing fads, precocious behavior and self absorption contribute to competitiveness, cliques, and conflicts between students, and between students and teachers (and at home between children and their parents). We help students focus and learn by minimizing distractions that do not support the learning environment or run counter to the values we are striving to develop. Keeping the rules simple also makes them easier for students, parents, and teachers to understand, thereby minimizing differences of interpretation, debate, and inconsistent application.

Young adolescents are searching for meaning and individuality - we need to guide them to find it within themselves and what they do in the world around them, not in a materialistic focus on "image." Early adolescent pressure for adult type experimentation in personal expression with one's body is best held off until the high school years. As a K-8 school, we must also be sensitive to the impact that behavior and dress of our older students has on the younger ones.

These dress and appearance guidelines may not cover all situations. The general rule is that a student's clothing and grooming should be appropriate to K-8 school setting and be conducive to the educational purpose and activities of the school. Teachers and other school staff have the right to ascertain when clothing or appearance is unacceptable, even if the specific attire is not mentioned in these guidelines. Additional restrictions based on developmental concerns may be requested by teachers and discussion with parents of their students.

Students not adhering to these guidelines will be given other clothing to wear (if available) for the rest of the day. If necessary, parents will be called to assist their child in meeting the dress code.

Dress and Appearance Guidelines

The following is mandatory:

- Clothing or accessories with images, wording, symbols or references to drugs, alcohol, violence, or any form of prejudice or put down of others is prohibited.
- Clothing must cover the body/torso, including the midriff, throughout the day including during all school activities. Exposing midriff while hands or arm is raised is acceptable.
- Shoes must allow for safe, active movement during the school day. Shoes must be secured to the feet (no “flip-flops” or other loose heel type sandals).
- Clothing shall cover all undergarments, except exposure of undergarment waistband (similar to midriff above), or undergarment straps is acceptable.
- Shorts shall have an inseam, and may not be shorter at the hip than they are at the inseam.
- Skirts/dresses should be at least mid thigh length. Wearing shorts or leggings under skirts is strongly recommended.
- Clothing should stay securely on the body with straps, necklines, waistbands, belts, and sleeve holes that keep the torso covered. Shirts/tops must have either straps or sleeves (no tube tops).
- No brimmed hats or hoods may be worn in the classroom, except for warmth, in cold weather and at the discretion of the teacher. 6th-8th grade students may wear brimmed hats turned around and hoods in the classroom, at the discretion of the teacher.
- For safety and to encourage freedom of movement, no excessively oversized clothing. Students may wear ripped jeans with holes that are below the top of inseam (similar to shorts above).

In addition to the above, our teachers strongly request that parents have students wear clothing and accessories that have no media or advertising images and logos. Simple, solid-color clothing free of such images and words creates a social school environment most free of distractions and supportive of your teachers work with children.

Other Guidelines

- Perfume and other scents are discouraged in classes due to possible allergies some may have to these products.
- Children in grades K-5 are expected to come to school free of make-up or nail polish and with their natural hair color. Students that come to school with nail polish may be asked to remove it. Children in grades 6-8 may wear makeup, nail polish, and have dyed/colored hair.
- In general, jewelry must not present a safety concern (e.g. long necklaces, hoops or dangling earrings). Jewelry should not present a distraction to the educational focus of the school environment.