

# **Curtis Fundamental Dress Code Changes**

## **Questions & Answers**

### **Why did the School Advisory Council (SAC) change the dress code?**

During several SAC meetings last school year, there were discussions about some of the inconsistencies in the previous dress code. In an effort to address these concerns, some members of the Council expressed an interest in a more comprehensive review of the rules, to allow capris for example, and others suggested a move to a full uniform. Although SACs are responsible for any enhancements to the district dress code under School Board policy, the Council decided to seek input from the parents on their opinions about the current rules and whether or not they would be interested in a full uniform for the school before even considering any changes.

The Council accomplished this objective as part of last year's parent survey when a statistically reliable sample of 272 parents answered the two questions asked. The results showed that 76.8% of the respondents said they were satisfied with the current dress code. However, 50.4% of the parents and guardians also indicated they would be interested in Curtis adopting a full uniform for students. Since a majority of parents wanted to consider the possibility of a uniform for the school, the Council worked throughout this year, with input from faculty, staff and the PTA Board, to create a proposal to modify the dress code that could be presented to the school community for consideration.

The results of the survey used to seek input on the proposal showed that between 55% and 68% of the school's stakeholders supported the suggested changes. On the other hand, there were almost 400 detailed comments provided by the survey participants with many raising concerns about specific parts of the planned modifications and sharing the possible negative impact on the school's families and children. Therefore, when the Council considered the proposal at its last meeting of the year, the proposed dress code was altered to address many of the issues raised before the Council passed the new policy. Ultimately, the Council only took action to modify the dress code because a majority of the school's parents, teachers, staff and administrators supported a change and the final policy incorporates many of the views and suggestions shared through participation of the school community in the process.

### **Does the Curtis Fundamental Dress Code present all the clothing guidelines that need to be followed?**

No. The Pinellas County School's (PCS) Code of Student Conduct covers many items not specifically addressed in the school's policy because the rules approved by the SAC are considered "additional dress and grooming requirements." For example, the PCS dress code states that shorts, skirts, divided skirts, dresses and culottes must be mid-thigh in length or longer. The Curtis guidelines do not permit dresses but requires that the other listed items be no shorter than 3" above the knee. Taken together, shorts, skirts and skorts cannot be more than 3" above the knee or mid-thigh in length, whichever is shorter. Parents should be knowledgeable about both the district and school dress code rules.

### **Are the collared shirts required to have a logo or school emblem?**

No. The shirts may have a small logo that indicates the clothing manufacturer or brand, but it is not required. The PTA may choose to sell some collared shirts with the school's emblem or logo which would also be permissible.

### **What outer garments can be worn inside the classroom when the weather is cold?**

The school's new dress code states that coats, jackets, sweaters and other outer garments are acceptable when appropriate due to weather conditions. These items do not replace the requirement for a collared shirt or Curtis sponsored t-shirt, but may be worn over any compliant top. In the classroom, coats and jackets must be removed, unzipped or left open, but sweaters, sweatshirts, hoodies and the like may continue to be worn if conditions warrant. Administrators, teachers and staff will continue to have significant discretion to decide whether or not particular outer garments need to be worn inside the buildings.

### **What is meant by "uniform style" or "plain" when describing shorts, skirts, skorts, jumpers, pants and jeans?**

Generally, both terms are used to describe clothing bottoms that are free of embellishments and are not baggy or overly casual in appearance. In the case of shorts and pants, “uniform style” options usually have interior pockets in the back. Plain jeans will not have any additional embroidery or designs except for the stitching typical on the rear, exterior pockets. Many vendors sell bottoms appropriate for school uniforms and the descriptions and pictures available in those company’s catalogs or on their web sites can help guide parents’ purchasing decisions.

### **What footwear is allowed under the Curtis dress code guidelines?**

The PCS Code of Student Conduct states that safe and appropriate footwear must be worn and lists roller skates, skate shoes and bedroom slippers as examples of inappropriate choices. The enhanced requirements of the Curtis policy require shoes appropriate for physical activity with a closed toe and heel plus a rubber sole. Since some high heels and dress shoes could fit this description, the school’s dress code specifically excludes these options. However, the SAC did opt to allow boots provide they meet the general footwear guidelines. Parents should assess whether or not their children can effectively participate in activities like Mileage Club and recess when making footwear purchases with the understanding that the administration, physical education teachers and staff will continue to determine whether particular shoes are appropriate for physical activity. Although some limitations on the type and style of socks students could wear were considered by the SAC and presented as part of the proposed dress code changes, no requirements were adopted when the new policy was approved.

### **When will the new dress code begin?**

The new dress code will begin with the 2011-12 school year. Additionally, students entering Curtis Fundamental during the school year shall be granted a grace period of fourteen (14) school days before being required to comply with the additional dress code requirements

### **Are any type of socks acceptable?**

yes

### **What if the student is tall and the correct fitting size uniform shorts are too short for code (3” above the knee) and the next size up is too big in the waist?**

Pants and capris are allowed; shorts should first be within the acceptable length, **IF** proper fit around the waist cannot be found

### **Will sweaters/sweatshirts be appropriate in the winter?**

Sweaters/sweatshirts will be allowed, if the weather is cool, but should be removed in the classroom, climate considering. Sweaters or sweatshirts do not replace the requirement for a collared shirt or Curtis sponsored t-shirt, but may be worn over any compliant top.

### **Will jeans with designs be allowed?**

The new dress code indicates “plain, blue denim jeans” so, designs should be minor (no sparkly embellishments or large designs that cover the legs or body of the jeans)

### **Will track pants/sweat pants be acceptable when the weather is cold?**

No

**What size of insignia/logo is allowed on the shirts?**

A small logo that reflects the clothing manufacturer or brand is acceptable. The insignia/logo should be less than 2" in diameter.

**Do all jeans need to be blue?**

Yes, the dress code specifies that plain, blue denim jeans are acceptable

**Do long sleeved shirts need to be collared?**

Yes, except for Curtis sponsored t-shirts

**In the winter, can a student wear a long-sleeved shirt underneath a collared, short-sleeved shirt? If so, do they have to be the same color?**

Yes, a student could wear a solid color long sleeve shirt underneath a short sleeved shirt. The shirts do not have to be the same color.

**Where do you measure when measuring a skirt to make sure it is 3 inches above the knee?**

From the top of the kneecap

**Does "blue jeans" mean pants only?**

Yes. Blue jean shorts, skirts, and capris are not acceptable.