

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



BOARD POLICY	
<i>Policy Section</i> Students/Admissions	<i>Policy Number</i> 219A
<i>Former Policy #</i> 219	<i>Page</i> 1 of 10
<i>Original Approved Date</i> January 29, 2002	<i>Last Approved Date</i> January 22, 2008 February 3rd, 2009 September 1st, 2009

POLICY TITLE: STUDENT DRESS AND SCHOOL UNIFORM - ELEMENTARY

SECTION A

1. PURPOSE

The York Catholic District School Board believes that a student dress code fosters:

- 1.1 A sense of belonging and pride;
- 1.2 A safe and respectful learning and teaching environment; and
- 1.3 A confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to school administrators and Catholic School Councils with respect to dress codes, and to clarify the decision making process that will be followed when school communities initiate a process to implement a standardized or uniform dress code.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the York Catholic District School Board that all schools shall have a dress code, identified as appropriate dress, standardized dress or uniform dress.

3. PARAMETERS

- 3.1 School administration, in collaboration with the Catholic School Council and the parent community, will determine the dress code for an elementary school.
- 3.2 Appropriate dress means that students will be dressed in clothes that are respectful, neat and clean. Such clothing should reflect the increasing physical maturity of the junior and intermediate students. School administration, in collaboration with the Catholic School Council, will determine a list of inappropriate/unacceptable

clothing/dress and communicate this list to the students and the parent community annually.

- 3.3 Standardized dress means that the school community has determined that students will dress in clothing of common colour and style, for example white tops and blue bottoms.
- 3.4 Uniform dress means that all students in a school are required to wear a school uniform consisting of pre-determined clothing pieces and purchased from the Board sole supplier.
- 3.5 In order to select a standardized or uniform dress code, a school community must complete the process as detailed in this policy.
- 3.6 No suspensions/expulsions for standardized or uniform dress infractions will occur at the elementary level.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Principals: To provide leadership and support to the school community with respect to student dress and school uniforms; and
To liaise with Purchasing Services on school uniform issues.

Catholic School Councils: To collaborate with the Principal in determining the dress code for the school.

Parents/Students: To abide by the approved dress code.

5. CROSS REFERENCES

YCDSB Policy 202	Safe Schools (Student Discipline)
YCDSB Policy 218	Code of Conduct
YCDSB Policy 606	Purchasing, Lease and Rental of Products and Services
YCDSB Policy 815	Fair Labour Practices
YCDSB Procedures	Procedures for the Purchasing, Lease and Rental of Products and Services

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SECTION B

GUIDELINES FOR INTRODUCING A STANDARDIZED OR UNIFORM DRESS CODE

Where the Catholic School Council and/or Principal are approached by a number of parents who are interested in instituting a standardized or uniform dress code, a decision-making process will be initiated.

The decision making process will enable all parents to decide upon the dress code for their school.

The process should commence in the fall of the school year and must be completed by March 31st for implementation in September of the next school year.

The following guidelines will be used to shape the decision-making process:

1. The principal, after consultation with the Catholic School Council, will conduct a preliminary community survey to assess if there is enough interest to pursue the decision-making process (see sample - Appendix A).
2. If the survey indicates sufficient interest a dress code sub-committee of the Catholic School Council will be formed to work with the principal throughout the process.
3. The Principal and either the Catholic School Council or the dress code sub-committee shall be responsible for the decision making process.
4. An information session shall be organized for the school community. Notification will be provided well ahead of time and each family will be invited to attend. At the information session, the decision-making process will be explained, and topics including standardized versus uniform dress code, costs and possible alternate options for Grade 8 students will be discussed.

There must also be an opportunity for attendees to discuss the pros and cons. The meeting will be chaired by the principal with either members of the Catholic School Council or dress code sub-committee providing support as required. It is important that attendance be taken at the meeting.

5. Those parents/families who did not attend the information session will receive an information package, summary of the meeting and the opportunity to submit comments and/or questions.
6. It is important that samples of the standardized and/or uniform dress be on display at the school throughout the decision-making process.
7. Following the information session and noting all feedback, the Catholic School Council will determine whether the official ballot will be for a standardized dress code or a uniform dress code.

8. The school community must be informed of this decision in a timely manner through various means of communication (including letters, website, council/school newsletter and assemblies).
9. The official ballot process shall be as follows:
 - a) Every family with children registered for the upcoming school year in Grades JK through Grade 6, the day before the ballots are due, shall be entitled to one ballot/vote. It is essential for all to understand that a vote in favour is a commitment from students and parents to comply with wearing the standardized or uniform dress.
 - b) A sample ballot is provided in Appendix B. Ballots should be numbered to ensure that there is one ballot provided for each family in the school community. It must include space for the family surname, an indication of their preference, the name and grade of each child, parent/guardian signature and the required return date.
 - c) In order to have an accurate and complete survey, the school principal (or designate), shall be responsible for collecting a ballot from **every registered family** (with children up to and including Grade 6) at the school. This may involve individual calls/reminders but only signed ballots are to be accepted (no telephone votes)! The voting process should be completed within a four week time period.
N.B. An unreturned ballot is considered to be a 'no' vote.
 - d) When all possible ballots have been collected, the principal and members of the school uniform committee will jointly tally the results. **A minimum of 85% of the total number of ballots being in favour** shall allow the Principal, in conjunction with the Catholic School Council, to move forward and implement a standardized or uniform dress code for the school.

NOTE: The requirement of **an 85% favourable** vote rather than a mere majority is a critical element of the decision-making process. In order for a standardized or uniform dress code to be successfully implemented, a large majority of the school community must be committed to supporting it. A standardized or uniform dress code lacking significant support by the students will not promote community spirit and will result in an inordinate amount of time spent on mediation, promotion and discipline.

- e) Should the school voting results come within 5% of the required percentage of favourable votes necessary to implement a standardized or uniform dress code, the following procedures will be followed:
 - i) The ballots of Grade 6 students who do not have younger siblings will be reviewed to determine if the elimination of their "no" votes will result in the achievement of the targeted percentage.
 - ii) The results of the screening of the Grade 6 votes and the impact on the number of favourable votes will be presented to the Catholic School Council.
 - iii) Results of the entire voting process will be presented to the Superintendent of Education: School Leadership for review and approval.

(School Letterhead)

(Date)

Preliminary Community Feedback Survey

Dear Parents/Guardians:

In response to requests from members of our school community to implement a standardized or uniform dress code, a committee, made up of members of the Catholic School Council and the principal, has been formed, in accordance with the Student Dress and School Uniform - Elementary Policy of the York Catholic District School Board. In order for the school uniform committee to proceed, we are required to determine overall interest from the community. To that end, we ask that you complete the attached feedback survey and return it to us by **(date)**.

Please note that this **Preliminary Feedback Survey** is **not the official ballot/vote** but the first step in the process. To assist you in making your decision, the following information is provided:

What is required to implement a standardized or uniform dress code?

If the results of the preliminary feedback survey indicate that there is enough interest to proceed, then the following process will take place:

- An information evening will be held.
- Samples of the **standardized or uniform dress** will be displayed at the school for the next few months.
- An official vote will be held with the following requirements:
 - Must occur in a timely manner (following the preliminary survey results);
 - Every family, with children up to and including Grade 6 is required to vote – one ballot per family.
 - There must be at least 85% majority in favour to implement a school uniform.
 - Should the results of the vote come within 5% of the votes necessary to implement a standardized or uniform dress code, the ballots of Grade 6 students who do not have younger siblings in the school will be reviewed to determine if the elimination of their “no” votes would result in the achievement of the required percentage.
- Upon obtaining 85% approval in the official vote, the implementation of the dress code would start in September.

Your feedback is vital to ensure that:

- ✓ You have a say in the development of a standardized or uniform dress code.
- ✓ We establish a policy that meets with the approval of our school community.
- ✓ If officially voted in by the community, we attain a high level of success in implementing a dress code.

What would a standardized or uniform dress code mean?

- Students would be required to attend school wearing clothing that meets with the criteria of the new standardized or uniform dress code.
- The proposed standardized or uniform dress will be developed with the following objectives in mind:

Attractiveness • Practicality • Comfort • Affordability • Durability

Thank you for your support in this initiative. We again ask that you complete the attached survey and return to us by **(date)**.

Yours in Catholic education,

Principal

Catholic School Council Chair

A copy of this preliminary survey may be found in the Principals' Filing Cabinet on FirstClass.

Important!

You **must return** this preliminary survey by _____ to your child's teacher.

This preliminary survey is not a vote and does not commit you to a standardized or uniform dress code.

It is part of the decision-making process.

Standardized or Uniform Dress Code Feedback Survey

Do you support the idea of initiation of a Uniform Dress Code? **Yes** **No**
(i.e. Uniform dress means that all students are required to wear a school uniform consisting of pre-determined clothing pieces and purchased from the Board sole supplier).

or
Do you support the idea of initiation of a Standardized Dress Code? **Yes** **No**
(i.e. Standardized dress means students will dress in clothing of common colour and style, for example white tops and blue bottoms).

COMMENTS

Would you like a member of the Dress Code Committee to contact you? **Yes** **No**

If so please provide contact phone number _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Students Name _____ Grade _____

Students Name _____ Grade _____

Students Name _____ Grade _____

Signature _____ Date _____

OFFICIAL DRESS CODE BALLOT

SCHOOL NAME _____

Please indicate your choice below by marking one appropriate box with an "X".

N.B. An unreturned ballot is considered to be a 'no' vote.

Ballot # _____
I agree to the implementation of a () dress code at () School

YES <input type="radio"/>	NO <input type="radio"/>
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Parent/Guardian: _____
(Please print your name)

Child's(ren) Name	Grade:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please share your comments:

It is required that every family respond for an accurate assessment of the school community's view on this important issue.

Please return this form to your child's teacher.

(School Letterhead)

Statement of Commitment

I/We the parent(s)/guardian(s) of:

CHILDREN'S NAME	GRADE
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

I/We understand that a standardized or uniform dress code is in place at this school and that all students are expected to wear the standardized or uniform dress on a daily basis.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s): _____

Student Signature(s) _____

Please return this form to your child's teacher.