

Dress Code

Rationale (Why)

Cole Middle School's dress code creates a professional, safe, and respectful learning environment where students can focus fully on their education. Clear, consistent expectations minimize distractions, support trauma-sensitive practices through predictability, and promote equity by ensuring all students are held to the same standard. A simple, uniform policy also strengthens school safety by making students easily identifiable throughout the day. Our goal is to cultivate a values-centered culture — not one rooted in compliance — where shared norms for attire reinforce community, belonging, and readiness to learn.

Vision

Cole Middle School's dress code fosters a safe, predictable, and values-driven environment where every student arrives ready to learn. Shared expectations for attire promote equity, strengthen belonging, and support a calm, focused school culture in which professionalism and readiness are visible from the moment students enter the building.

Criteria For Success

- ☐ Students arrive in uniform every day.
- ☐ Uniform expectations are predictable and clear, reducing distractions and supporting trauma-sensitive practices.
- ☐ Students are easily identifiable, strengthening overall school safety.
- ☐ Staff reinforce expectations warmly and respectfully, using positive interactions rather than compliance-based enforcement.
- ☐ Uniform needs are identified early, and students receive support quickly and equitably.
- ☐ Families partner with the school to maintain readiness and ensure students have required uniform items.
- ☐ Shared norms for attire strengthen belonging, professionalism, and readiness to learn across the school community.

Overview

Arrival and Advisory are the primary checkpoints where staff ensure students begin the day in full uniform. During the first three minutes of class entry, teachers and hallway staff reinforce expectations and redirect students as needed. Throughout the day, staff address any dress code infraction immediately and respectfully, maintaining a calm, professional tone that supports belonging and readiness to learn.

Dress Code Expectations

Uniform Type	Acceptable	Not Permitted
Shirts/ sweatshirts/ jackets	- Students must wear a DSST Cole top (polo, T-shirt, gym shirt, etc). - DSST Cole crewnecks and hoodies may be worn but the hood cannot be worn over heads - Outside jackets and sweatshirts with hoods must be taken off before entering class and put away in the student's locker.	- Non-DSST shirt. Must have DSST logo. - Non-DSST jackets or sweatshirts. These must be placed in lockers. - Hoods of any kind may not be worn in the building. - Tops may not be folded up, tied up, tucked up or under in order to show stomach or waistline.
Bottoms	- Jeans or khaki material bottoms. - Shorts and skirts that are fingertip length or longer at their shortest point. - All bottoms must be fully opaque and of a thick/solid material.	- Bottoms that are shorter than fingertip length. - Pajamas. - Any rips - Any pants or shorts that are see through or of excessively thin material. - Sagging is not permitted

Shoes	- Students may wear ANY closed toed and hard soled shoes/boots. - Vans, Converse, Toms, athletic shoes, ballet flats, Crocs with backs and Uggs (or similar shoes) are permitted.	- Open toed shoes, slides, slippers, or house shoes. - Shoes with heels or platforms over 2 inches.
Dress Down Days	Students may dress in clothes of their choice, avoiding all items listed in the "Not Permitted" column.	- Pajamas - Jeans/Pants with rips below the knee - Shorts that are shorter than finger-length - Tank tops, low cut tops, see through or lace tops, tops that show the stomach - Any clothes that reference drugs, alcohol, weapons, violence, any type of sexual connotations or gang activity.
Hats, Headwear, and Accessories	Any head wraps or coverings related to religious beliefs ARE permitted.	- Hats of any sort - Hoods, bonnets and durags - Any clothes that reference drugs, alcohol, weapons, violence, any type of sexual connotations or gang activity. - Purses/small bags must be stored in lockers. - Ski masks are NOT permitted