

SOUTHWEST COVENANT SCHOOL

SECONDARY DRESS CODE



“Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ” (Philippians 1:27).

“The word *conversation* includes the whole course of our life and behavior in the world. The Greek word signifies the actions and the privileges of citizenship. Thus, we are commanded to let our actions, as citizens of the New Jerusalem, give glory to the gospel of Christ. *The gospel is very simple.* There should be a simplicity about our manner, our speech, our dress, and our whole behavior. This is the very soul of beauty.”

Charles H. Spurgeon

SWCS Dress Code Guidelines

Our philosophy of dress is designed to provide an atmosphere conducive for education. The desire of this policy is to honor the Lord with a neat, clean, and modest appearance that provides a distraction free environment for students. Also, we recognize our school is both a training center for future job placement and a source of reinforcement for the values espoused in a Christian home environment. A sensitivity to and awareness of appropriate dress is an important aspect of any individual's social and spiritual maturity.

Therefore, our dress code is not in place as legalistic rules but are designed for a quality educational environment. Yet, the following Scriptures provide some guidance:

“Even in your youthfulness, be a great example of those around you in your speech, conduct, love, faith and purity.” (I Timothy 4:12). Do not live (or dress) in a way that others look down at you and lose respect for your Christian testimony.

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.” (I Peter 3:3-4). God desires for us to place more emphasis on maturing the inner person than on decorating the outside.

“A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor a man wear women’s clothing, for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this.” (Deuteronomy 22:5). God does not condone the unisex look. Instead, He desires it to be obvious from our appearance that men are men and women are women.

“I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety...” (I Timothy 2:9) and *“Do not cause anyone to stumble...” (I Corinthians 10:32).* All of us should dress with modesty and decency so that we do not draw another person into sin by the way we dress.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (I Corinthians 10:31). Our desire should be to glorify God in the way we dress.

Specific Dress Code Guidelines for the Secondary School

- I. All SWCS students in grades 6-12 will observe the following dress/appearance code. Any questions regarding specific attire should be directed to the principal and/or Academic Coordinator prior to wearing the clothes to school. This code is given to provide guidelines for acceptable and modest dress and appearance. With changing fashion, it is impossible to print a complete list of acceptable or unacceptable dress; therefore, students should understand the intent of these guidelines and respond appropriately when a question arises. As much as we would like to produce a completely objective list, there will always be matters of subjectivity arise. Therefore, ***the principal will be the final word on the appropriateness of dress.*** When in doubt, ask first! **Enrollment at SWCS indicates a willingness by the student and parents to abide by the letter and spirit of the dress code.** *“Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the*

authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.”
(Romans 13:5)

- II. The principal and/or the Academic Services Coordinator will be responsible for determining if a students' attire does not meet school guidelines. Teachers will be responsible for monitoring student apparel by asking the student to leave class and report to the office with a dress code issue. This procedure will give priority time to teaching, improve consistency in applying guidelines, and help students deal with possible violations in a more discreet manner.
- III. If a student is not dressed according to dress code, the school office will contact the parents to take corrective action by immediately bringing the appropriate clothes to school. If a parent cannot be reached, the student may borrow appropriate clothes from a friend or from the school supplies articles in the "Good Will Box." At the discretion of Administration, any student deemed "out of dress code" will be denied admittance to class until the violation is corrected. Time missed from class as a result of a dress code violation will be considered unexcused. Additional consequences of dress code violations are as follows:
- 3rd offense - Student will receive a detention.
 - 4th offense - Student will receive a half-day in-school suspension.
 - 5th offense - Student will receive a full day in-school suspension.

Repeated offenses will result in a conference with the principal and further disciplinary action. A continued demonstration of unwillingness to abide by the school guidelines may be grounds for expulsion or disqualification for re-admission to SWCS.

- IV. The following dress code will be observed by all SWCS students at school as well as at all school functions. The intent is that students will be neat, clean, modest and positive representatives of SWCS at all times.

A. Girls

1. Clothing that is threadbare, dirty, ripped, has holes, fits extremely large and is sloppy, is see-through, exposes a bare midriff or bare back, is low cut, tight fitting, or is *considered* immodest in any way is unacceptable. Decorative patches or frays are permissible. Frays are not permitted on shorts.
2. Dresses, skirts, and split skirts, and slits in skirts must be of modest length (not more than 2" above the top of the kneecap).
3. All Shirts are to be neatly hemmed and may be worn tucked or not tucked. All shirts must be modest and provide sufficient coverage to allow freedom of movement.
 - Non-tucked shirts must be long enough to allow movement without revealing any skin at the midriff or waist. Short tops may only be worn non-tucked if layered over another fully tucked in shirt.

- Sleeveless blouses, shirts, or dresses must be a least 2” wide at the narrowest part and must fully cover undergarments. (NOTHING should show around the armholes, neckline, or back).

Slacks, capris, casual athletic pants, and neatly hemmed blue jeans are permissible. Sweatpants, tear away athletic pants, flannel pants and pajama pants may NOT be worn. “Jeggings”/leggings are not permissible as pants. Jeggings and leggings are only permissible with dress or top that meets dress code (2” from top of knee). If pants fit tightly from waist to knee, a top must cover the seat area. Casual athletic pants/joggers that are acceptable are neat looking (subject to principal) and cannot be sweat-shirt material.

4. Modest shorts (not more than 2” above the top of the kneecap) are permissible. No biker shorts, “soccer style” gym shorts, athletic style shorts, or non-hemmed shorts may be worn. Shorts must be casual, not gym/athletic shorts. Shorts are not permissible if during activity or sitting, under garments become visible. Students are to use discretion and wear sensible clothing in colder weather.
5. Pants or shorts with words printed across the seat area (including letters, slogans, team names, brand names, and logos, etc.) may not be worn.
6. Shoes must be worn at all times. Flip-flops and athletic style shoes may not be worn on dress-up days.
7. Shorts worn for athletic practice are subject to the athletic director. Tights under athletic short are recommended and may be required for practice and/or games.
8. Tattoos and body piercing are not permitted. (Girls may wear earrings.)

Note: SWCS students will face disciplinary action if they get a tattoo or other body modification. The discipline will result in a loss of some or all extracurricular activity privileges and could result in suspension or expulsion. (See Handbook VI.E.12)

Any existing tattoos must be covered at all times in every public setting relating to Southwest Covenant (including social media) and will be addressed on an individual basis.

9. No caps or hats should be worn except on specified days. No hoods will be permitted to be worn inside the school building.
10. Hair coloring is allowed but must be within the spectrum of natural hair colors.
11. Anything contrary to our Christian standards and any apparel or accessories the headmaster or principal determine are incompatible with a Biblical worldview will not be permitted. (Remember, “if in doubt, don’t;” or at least check first!)
12. In accordance with Deuteronomy 22:5, girls clothing should not resemble boy’s attire. In a world that is graying the lines of gender, we want to affirm the God assigned roles of male and female. In cases that are questionable, an administrator will have a discussion with the student before issuing a dress code violation. The principal has the final decision in subjective areas.

B. Boys

1. Clothing that is threadbare, dirty, ripped, has holes or patches, is frayed, fits extremely large and is sloppy, is gang related (i.e., “ragheads,” chains, etc), can be seen-through, exposes a bare midriff or bare back, or is tight fitting is unacceptable.
2. All shirts are to be neat, hemmed, and may be worn tucked or not tucked.
3. Slacks, casual athletic pants (defined below), and neatly hemmed blue jeans are permitted. Sweatpants, tear away athletic pants, flannel pants and pajama pants may NOT be worn. Large, baggy, or sagging pants that fit below the waistline are not permitted.
Casual athletic pants/joggers that are acceptable are ~~cuffed at the ankle~~ and neat looking (subject to principal). They cannot be sweat-shirt material.
4. Modest shorts (not more than 2” above the top of the kneecap) are permissible. No biker shorts, “soccer style” gym shorts, athletic style shorts, or non-hemmed shorts may be worn. Students are to use discretion and wear sensible clothing in colder weather. Since athletic shorts are not allowed, acceptable shorts for boys generally have belt loops, a zipper, and a fly, along with the 2” rule. Elastic waists are only allowed if the shorts are clearly designed to resemble casual (khaki type) shorts, and not athletic short material. Shorts are not permissible if during activity or sitting, under garments become visible.
5. Pants or shorts with words printed across the seat area (including letters, slogans, team names, brand names, and logos, etc.) may not be worn.
6. Shoes must be always worn.
7. Hair must be well groomed, clean, and kept trimmed above the shirt collar, above the eyebrows, and no longer than mid-ear (no “tails,” ponytails, etc. or gang related design). Facial hair, if worn, must be neatly trimmed.
8. Hair coloring must be within the spectrum of natural hair colors.
9. Shorts worn for athletic practice and events may be no shorter than 2” above the top of the kneecap.
10. Tattoos, earrings, or any kind of body piercing is considered inappropriate and will not be allowed.

Note: SWCS students will face disciplinary action if they get a tattoo or other body modification. The discipline will result in a loss of some or all extracurricular activity privileges and could result in suspension or expulsion. (See Handbook VI.E.12)

Any existing tattoos must be covered at all times in every public setting relating to Southwest Covenant (including social media) and will be addressed on an individual basis.

11. No caps or hats should be worn except on specified days.

12. Anything contrary to our Christian standards and any apparel or accessories the headmaster or principal determine are incompatible with a Biblical worldview will not be permitted. (Remember, “if in doubt, don’t;” or at least check first!)
13. In accordance with Deuteronomy 22:5, boys clothing should not resemble girls’ attire. In a world that is graying the lines of gender, we want to affirm the God assigned roles of male and female. In cases that are questionable, an administrator will have a discussion with the student before issuing a dress code violation. The principal has the final decision in subjective areas.

C. Additional Guidelines

Certain symbols are considered to be inconsistent with and incompatible to the philosophy of SWCS. Therefore requirements regarding apparel with symbols, pictures, slogans, etc., must conform to the following guidelines:

Permissible:

Southwest Covenant School	Geographic locations
Christian themes	Sport themes
Colleges and universities	Numbers
Personal monograms	Animals

Not Permissible:

Eskimo Joe clothing or other brands typifying a bar atmosphere
 Advertisements of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products
 Philosophies or religious beliefs, i.e., signs of the zodiac, peace symbols, etc.
 Any reference to a secular band or music group of any genre

Inappropriate words, vulgar connotations, underlying messages, or anything inconsistent with the Christian philosophy of SWCS. This list is not exhaustive, but serves as an example of what is not permissible. The principal has the final authority.

D. Chapel Dress

1. Girls must wear a dress or skirt ensemble and dress shoes (no flip-flops or athletic shoes).
2. Boys are to wear dress slacks with a belt, dress shirt and tie, socks, and dress shoes with socks. Dress shirts are to be worn tucked in, with the collar buttoned and tie cinched.
3. Students are not permitted to wear jackets, sweatshirts, hoodies or coats over Chapel dress in the classroom or during chapel without specific permission from the classroom teacher.

E. Activity Dress

There are certain days or activities that will warrant a neater dress code than our normal dress code requires. This dress code is what many consider “Business-casual”. The following guidelines are to be followed on days that are deemed “Activity Dress”:

Boys: Slacks, belts, collared shirt, and dress shoes with socks. Shirt must be kept tucked in throughout the day.

Girls: Slacks are permitted. Dress shoes (no flip-flops or athletic shoes)

Students are not permitted to wear jackets, sweatshirts, hoodies or coats over Activity dress in the classroom or during chapel without specific permission from the classroom teacher.

F. **Athletic Dress** (uniforms for games and practices):

The head coach and athletic director with administrative approval will set the dress code policy/standard for practice and games for each specific team.

Dress Guidelines for SWCS Junior/Senior Banquet (For Students, Faculty, Parents, and Guests)

This is a special event, and our desire is that we be found pleasing in the sight of God in all that we wear, do, and say. The Junior/Senior Banquet is considered a formal occasion for the students. However, students should not feel obligated to purchase or rent formal attire for the evening. Students, faculty, and senior parents wearing their “Sunday best” or “wedding” clothes should feel properly attired. Some specific guidelines are listed below:

Gentlemen:

- A suit or sport coat and dress slacks must be worn. (No retro styles.)
- A dress shirt, appropriate dress tie, socks, and dress shoes must be worn.

Ladies:

- Skirts or slits in skirts may not be shorter than 2” above the top of the kneecap.
- Sleeveless blouses or dresses must have straps. Spaghetti straps or larger are allowed. The armhole should fit the arm so that undergarments are not revealed
- The front or neckline of the dress should be modest and show no cleavage.
- The back of the dress should not be lower than the middle of the back and cut no wider than the outside of the shoulder.
- The dress should be loose enough to be comfortable while seated and not so form fitting as to call undue attention to physical features.

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Transparent fabrics may be used for sleeves but must be fully lined on the body of the dress. (Nude fabrics cannot be used to make a dress fit dress code.)

- The Academic Coordinator will schedule dress reviews for all junior and senior girls. All female students must have their dresses approved prior to the banquet.