**Student Appearance**

In an effort to minimize the length of board policy manuals, ISFIS suggests your board policy manual should have three goals; 1) include policies that are required by state or federal law 2) include policies that focus on the work of the board and 3) include policies of unique cultural or situational focus required in your district due to practice, precedent, or politics.

In light of that focus, we suggest eliminating policy 540 Student Appearance from your board policy manual. It fits better into the communication delivered to parents and students through the student handbook.

If however, your local context includes the requirement of such a policy, we suggest an updated language regarding head coverings, to include medical or religious practices. That change is shown in the attached ISFIS Sample 540.

Contact [margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com](mailto:margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com) with questions.

***The “dot your I’s and cross your T’s” disclaimer:*** *This Policy Booster is not a substitute for legal advice, but rather, the impetus to get the local ball rolling. Check with your local school attorney and consider the impact this policy will have on other policies, handbooks, bargaining agreements, administrative procedures and forms in the district.*

# 540 STUDENT APPEARANCE

The District and the Board believe inappropriate student appearance causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors.

Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment.  The standards will be those generally acceptable to the community as appropriate in a school setting.

The Board expects students to come to school looking clean and neat, dressed in a manner which is accepted as being in good taste, and consistent with an attitude and atmosphere that is conducive to study and learning.  Extreme hairstyle and dress that is unduly immodest, distracting or inappropriate for a school environment will not be allowed.  Clothing or other apparel promoting or referring products illegal for use by minors, (i.e. alcohol, tobacco, drugs) and/or clothing displaying obscene material or profanity or referring to inappropriate or prohibited conduct are not allowed.  Low riding pants and low cut tops are not acceptable.  Bare midriffs will not be acceptable for boys or girls.  Clothes with holes or tears in inappropriate places are not acceptable.  Hats or any head coverings may not be worn in the building during school time, except for medical reasons or in observance of religious practices.  Any accessories deemed unsafe (such as chains or jewelry/accessories with spikes) will not be allowed.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principals, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

While the primary responsibility for appearance lies with the students and their parents, appearance disruptive to the educational program will not be tolerated.  When, in the judgment of a principal, a student's appearance or mode of dress disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student may be required to make modifications.