

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Lowell High School
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To: Jeannine Durkin

From: Marianne Busted, Head of Lowell High School

Date: December 10, 2018

Subject: Dress Code Proposal Change

The students of Lowell High School are proposing a change to the current dress code policy in the LPS Handbook (see below). They would like the new policy to allow head wraps and scarves to be worn at school. They have met several times with administration at LHS, and with the Superintendent to discuss this request, as well as the student body. In order to better understand the reasoning behind their request, they prepared a short video for your review. In addition, the staff at LHS was surveyed as to whether or not they would support the change and two thirds of the staff was in favor of it. Since that survey took place, we shared the student video with LHS staff on December 5, 2018 and shared it with all school Principals for their review and feedback as this language is contained in the Elementary and Middle School Handbook as well. All Principals who responded were in favor of supporting the revision.

Background Information:

The dress code was updated and changed for the 2018-19 school year to exclude any type of head covering for all students for safety and security reasons. Dr. Roxane Howe presented the School Committee with an updated Parent/Student Handbook which included the updated policy, which was approved during the June 20, 2018 School Committee Meeting.

At the beginning of this school year, Deans and the Head of School informed students of the change and also addressed anyone who was not following the policy. Teachers also announced the change during advisory and on the Raider Report. Although the policy was meant to be consistent among all students, this created more concern among other students. We were made aware that students were going to protest the dress code change, so we did allow them to peacefully protest their discontent. Some students came to school wearing all different types of head coverings in protest of this policy. Immediately following this event, the Head of School worked with a small group of students to discuss a potential revision to the policy.

Attached is the survey sent to all LHS staff, including the results.

1. Do you support the following change to the LHS Dress Code Policy:

Current Wording:

Students are not permitted to wear the following:

- Any apparel that hinders identification to include all head coverings. This includes but is not limited to: hats, hoods, scarves, head wraps, bandanas, wave caps, do-rags, skull caps.
(Exceptions will be made for documented religious or medical reasons or identified disabilities.)

Proposed Wording:

Students are not permitted to wear the following:

- Any apparel that hinders identification. This includes but is not limited to: hats, hoods, bandanas, wave caps, do-rags, skull caps. (Exceptions will be made for documented religious or medical reasons or identified disabilities.)

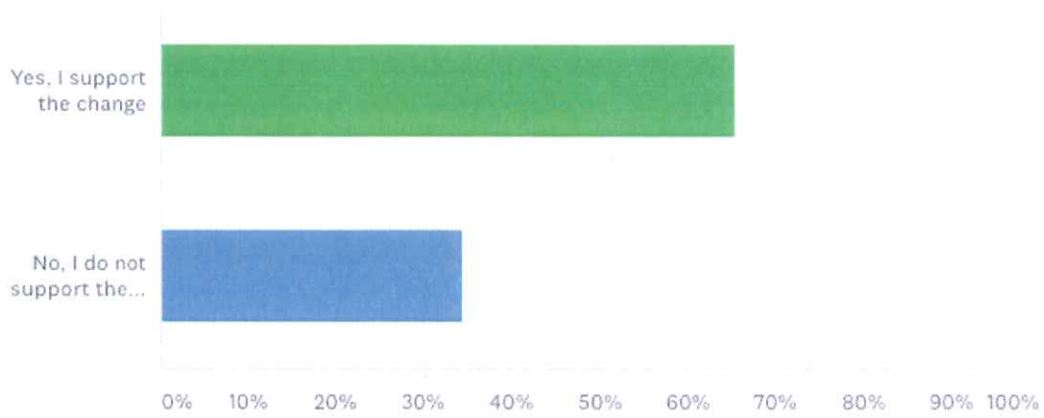
Changes: remove "to include all head coverings" ; remove "scarves" and "head wraps." With the proposed wording, scarves and head wraps will be acceptable head coverings, while all others will remain forbidden, except for documented religious or medical reasons or identified disabilities.

- Yes, I support the change
- No, I do not support the change

2. If you want to make a comment, please make it here.

This proposal is supported by a majority of the school staff and students. We would like to move forward with a pilot of allowing the head wraps and scarves for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school year which would include a re-evaluation in June 2019.

Answered: 191 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES

Yes, I support the change

No, I do not support the change

TOTAL

RESPONSES

65.45%

34.55%

125

66

191