

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY SUBSTITUTE FOR

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
SENATE, Nos. 540 and 897 and ASSEMBLY, No. 920

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

ADOPTED MAY 30, 1996

Sponsored by Assemblymen ROCCO, DORIA, Senators
Inverso, Lesniak, Ewing, and McGreevey

1 AN ACT concerning school dress codes and supplementing chapter 11
2 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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4 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that many educators believe
8 that school dress can significantly influence pupil behavior and that
9 schools that have adopted dress codes, including dress codes which
10 require school uniforms and which prohibit clothing indicating
11 membership in certain gangs, experience greater school pride and
12 improved behavior in and out of the classroom. The Legislature
13 further finds that to assist in controlling the environment in public
14 schools, to facilitate and maintain an effective learning environment,
15 and to keep the focus of the classroom on learning, school districts
16 should be specifically authorized to implement uniform clothing
17 requirements for their students.

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19 2. a. A board of education may adopt a dress code policy ¹[which
20 may include a requirement] to require¹ that students wear a school
21 uniform if ¹[such a] the¹ policy is requested by the principal, staff and
22 parents of an individual school and if the board determines that the
23 policy will enhance the school learning environment. Any policy
24 adopted which requires the wearing of a uniform shall include a
25 provision to assist economically disadvantaged students. The board
26 shall hold a public hearing prior to the adoption of the policy and shall
27 not implement the policy with less than three months notice to the

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹ Senate SED committee amendments adopted June 20, 1996.

1 parents or guardians of the students. The specific uniform selected
2 shall be determined by the principal, staff, and parents of the individual
3 school.

4 b. The board of education ¹[shall] may¹ provide a method
5 whereby parents may choose not to comply with an adopted school
6 uniform policy. ¹[A] If the board provides such a method, a¹ student
7 shall not be penalized academically or otherwise discriminated against
8 nor denied admittance to school if the student's parents choose not to
9 comply with the school uniform policy.

10 c. A dress code policy adopted pursuant to this section shall not
11 preclude students who participate in a nationally recognized youth
12 organization which is approved by the board of education from
13 wearing organization uniforms to school on days that the organization
14 has scheduled a meeting.

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16 3. A board of education may adopt a dress code policy to prohibit
17 students from wearing, while on school property, any type of clothing,
18 apparel or accessory which indicates that the student has membership
19 in, or affiliation with, any gang associated with criminal activities. The
20 local law enforcement agency shall advise the board, upon its request,
21 of gangs which are associated with criminal activities.

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23 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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Permits a school board to adopt dress code policy.