

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

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

ADOPTED MAY 2, 1996

Sponsored by Senators **INVERSO, LESNIAK**, Assemblyman **ROCCO**,  
Senators **EWING, MCGREEVY** and Assemblyman **DORIA**

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 to  
20 require that students wear a school uniform if the policy is requested  
21 by the principal, staff and parents of an individual school and if the  
22 board determines that the policy will enhance the school learning  
23 environment. Any policy adopted which requires the wearing of a  
24 uniform shall include a provision to assist economically disadvantaged  
25 students. The board shall hold a public hearing prior to the adoption  
26 of the policy and shall not implement the policy with less than three  
27 months notice to the parents or guardians of the students. The specific  
28 uniform selected shall be determined by the principal, staff, and parents  
29 of the individual school.

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31 b. The board of education may provide a method whereby parents  
32 may choose not to comply with an adopted school uniform policy. If  
33 the board provides such a method, a student shall not be penalized  
34 academically or otherwise discriminated against nor denied admittance  
to school if the student's parents choose not to comply with the

1 school uniform policy.

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

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

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15 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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Permits a school board to adopt dress code policy.