

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES OF THE
MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 8.20
Uniforms and STUDENT DRESS CODE

(1) PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the wearing of school uniforms.

(2) SCOPE

This policy applies to all students in traditional Milwaukee Public Schools.

(3) POLICY STATEMENT

Milwaukee Public Schools believes that a positive school learning environment is a major factor in high student achievement. There are many factors that lead to a positive learning environment. Safety, discipline and school unity are three of those factors. Milwaukee Public Schools believes that wearing school uniforms is one way to achieve all three of these goals. A school uniform, which refers to wearing the same style and color of dress, can create a safer environment because they help to identify students who belong on a school campus, thus making it easier to identify non-school persons who may be on school grounds for disruptive purposes. They create a more disciplined environment by reducing negative competition and arguments over dress styles, by reducing drop-out rates, and by increasing school attendance. Finally, school uniforms promote school unity by eliminating factors that can create economic and social divisions among individuals, such as clothing style and brands, thus allowing students to become more conscious of such shared goals as meeting academic standards, developing self-confidence and understanding diversity. The positive learning environment to which wearing school uniforms helps to create an environment in which student achievement is the highest priority.

(4) UNIFORMS

(a) All schools shall implement a uniform policy, school governance councils shall determine whether or not pupils enrolled in the school should wear a uniform while in school or while under the supervision of the school authority. The school governance council's decision shall be based on broad-based support from the school's community, including parents, students, staff, and others.

(b) Prior to implementation, input from the school community is to be gathered relative to styles, colors, and cost of the school uniform. Additionally, schools may opt-out from complying with the policy by filing a written exemption letter to their Regional Superintendent stating reasons for their decision by March 1st of each school year. This decision will not be put into effect until the following school year. Furthermore, schools shall produce documentation detailing 80 percent of stakeholder agreement with the opt-out process.

(c) A parent or guardian of a pupil enrolled in the school may exempt his/her child from complying with the policy by filing a written exemption form with the school principal.

(d) The school and its staff shall ensure that no pupil is penalized academically or otherwise discriminated against because the pupil's parent or guardian has chosen to exempt the pupil from complying with the uniform policy.

(e) The principal shall work with local discount merchants to identify the most inexpensive uniform components and shall notify parents as to where such uniforms may be purchased. The school governance council shall solicit donations from community businesses and agencies to be used to assist economically disadvantaged pupils to purchase the uniforms.

(f) Each parent or guardian of a pupil enrolled in a school will be notified at least three months

before the implementation of the policy and thereafter yearly.

(g) Upon adoption of the uniform policy, and annually thereafter, the principal shall send a notice to parents and guardians of students, informing them of the following:

1. That a parent or guardian of a pupil may exempt his/her child from complying with the policy by filing a written exemption form with the principal;
2. That no student shall be penalized academically or otherwise discriminated against because the pupil's parent or guardian has chosen to exempt the pupil from complying with the policy;
3. Where uniforms can be purchased and the names of local discount merchants offering the most inexpensive uniforms;
4. The person, within the school, whom the parent or guardian may contact to request financial assistance for the purchase of a uniform.

(5) BASIC UNIFORM GUIDELINES

1. The basic district uniform shall be tan, navy blue or black khaki pants, skirt or jumper and a navy blue or black long sleeve or short sleeve shirt with a collar (polo style, dress style, or turtleneck). A student can wear any combination of the official district uniform colors or school base identified colors.
2. Full-length pants, cropped pants, cargo pants and straight-legged capri pants are permitted. Denim jeans, pedal pushers, and bell bottoms are not permitted.
3. Walking shorts are permitted for elementary, middle/junior high and high school students. (Walking shorts are straight-legged shorts that are at the knee.)
4. Pants must fit at the waist and not be oversized or undersized (e.g., Baggy pants, sagging pants, tights, or pants made of spandex are prohibited.). If belts are worn they must be fitted and put through belt loops.
5. Skirts or jumpers must be at or below the knee.
6. Shirts must be tucked on the inside unless they are made to be worn over pants or skirts.
7. Light jackets, vests, shirts, sweaters, sweat shirts, and cardigans are permitted as items that may be worn over the uniform top. They must be tan, navy blue, black or one of the additional colors approved by the school principal.
8. No denim material may be worn as uniform clothing.
9. All uniform clothing must be plain without any manufacturer's logos, brand names, pictures, or insignias visible on the clothing unless approved by school principal.
10. Shoes with rollers/wheels are prohibited. Athletic shoes, sandals with straps on the heel, and boots are permitted.
11. Heavy coats, heavy jackets and raincoats are not covered by these regulations and are not to be worn during the school day unless permitted by the principal for special circumstances.
12. Students may wear the uniforms of nationally-recognized student organizations at their schools on days specified by the organization and approved by school principal.
13. Violation of the school uniform policy shall not affect a student's academic or conduct grade.
14. Parent complaints about the school uniform policy and the school dress code shall be reported to the principal or a designee.
15. The Department of Specialized Services can decide whether any student(s) should be exempt from the School Uniforms Policy due to a student's exceptionality.
16. The school uniform policy shall be in effect during both the school year and any district Summer Program.

(6) STUDENT DRESS CODE

- (a) Rules concerning student dress may be established by individual schools only when they

relate to a specific educational, health, or safety purpose. Students shall not be excluded from regular instruction because of their appearance if style, fashion, or taste is the sole criterion for such exclusion.

(b) While the school administration may require students participating in physical education classes to wear certain types of clothing such as sneakers, white socks, shorts, and tee shirts, they may not prescribe a specific brand which students must buy. Schools also may prohibit articles of clothing that cause excessive maintenance problems, such as cleats on boots, shoes that scratch floors, trousers with metal inserts that scratch furniture, etc.

(c) Additionally, existing laws and school regulations require the wearing of protective clothing, eye shields, or other dress for the health or safety of students. For example, a hair net or cap may be required where long hair may pose a health or safety threat near open flames, moving machinery, or in food classes. Each school shall make provisions for notifying students of these rules.

5; revised 4-20-94, 3-27-2003

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