

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES OF THE
MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 8.20
Uniforms and STUDENT DRESS CODE

(1) GENERAL PRINCIPLES 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

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. 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 contributes helps to create an environment in which student achievement is the highest priority.

(4) UNIFORMS 's

(a) All schools shall implement a uniform policy effective fall semester of 2017, Each elementary and K-8 school governance councils shall determine whether or not to adopt a policy requiring all pupils enrolled in the school should to 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 the school community's agreement among parents, community members, and the school governance council with the opt-out process. The principal and/or a designee of the school governance council shall collect the documentation.

(c) A parent or legal 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 legal guardian has chosen to exempt the pupil from complying with the uniform policy.

(e) The principal shall work with local discount merchants to MPS Procurement Services and the Department of Business Community and Family Partnerships 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 legal guardian of a pupil enrolled in an elementary or K-8 a school will be

notified at least three months before the implementation of the policy and thereafter that yearly.

~~(g) Any petition for rescinding or modifying a previously implemented uniform policy must be signed by at least 20% of the schools community, which may include parents, students, and staff members, and be submitted to the school governance council for consideration.~~

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

1. That a parent or legal 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 legal 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 legal guardian may contact to request financial assistance for the purchase of a uniform.
5. Uniforms are to be worn during the regularly scheduled school day. They are not required to be worn at school-based events that occur after the regularly scheduled school days.
6. Students who transfer to MPS after Third Friday for the reasons of change of residence, new to MPS, returning to MPS, opting-out of charter, or returning from court-ordered facilities shall be provided a 30-day grace period to obtain their uniform.

(5) BASIC UNIFORM GUIDELINES

1. The basic district uniform shall be tan, navy blue or black khaki style 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-based identified colors as identified by the principal and school governance council.
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 knee length.)
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 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 the school principal in accordance with Administrative Policy 9.08: Advertising in the Schools.
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 or participation in extra-curricular activities.

14. Parent or legal guardian written 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 may 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 the course of the school year.

(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) School officials may prohibit dress which is so distracting as to interfere with the learning process, but may not impose limitations on dress in which fashion or taste is the sole consideration, even if a majority of students have approved a school dress code.~~

(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

Previous Coding: Admin. Policy JFCA, prior to May 1995; Admin. Policy 10.20, May 1995-August 1996

Legal Ref.: W.S. 119.18(21)

— ♦ —