

KANAWHA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

Uniforms

Series: J34

Reference:

Issued: 03.19.1998

Revised:

Revision Number:

34.01Basis. The Board acknowledges the effort undertaken by the ad hoc **Uniform Committee** to examine the effects of public school student uniform policies in other Districts throughout the country. The Committee's review supports the conclusion that appropriate student uniform policies result in: enhanced school safety; improved learning environment; a reduction in ethnic and racial tensions; improved relations between students of differing socioeconomic backgrounds; improved behavior; improved self-esteem, and produced cost savings for participating families. For these reasons the Board has determined the adoption of uniform policies by schools should be an option that may be considered by individual school communities.

34.02Pilot Program. The Superintendent may authorize the establishment of pilot student uniform programs in schools that obtain the approval of the principal, the faculty senate, the local school improvement council and 80% of the school's parents and guardians (to be determined by an election).

34.03School Uniform Committee. Following an election to adopt a school student uniform policy, the Principal shall appoint a committee that includes students, professional and service staff, and parents to select the types and colors of the school uniform. The school uniform committee shall also decide upon: compliance measures; a process to provide financial assistance and application procedures; the method of recycling uniforms within the school community; and, a procedure to provide notice of uniform sales and competitive prices from vendors of uniform articles.

34.04Financial Assistance Guidelines. No student may be denied attendance at school, penalized or otherwise subject to compliance measures, for failing to wear a uniform because of financial hardship. Every school student uniform program must include:

- A procedure and criteria to identify families in need of financial assistance;
- A description of the form and type of financial assistance that will be available in the school community;
- The designation of a staff member or school volunteer to assist families in need of assistance; and,
- Resources, including business partners, available to provide assistance.

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34.05 Compliance Measure Guidelines. No student may be expelled from school, or expelled from school, or receive a lower academic grade for failure to comply with a school's student uniform program. Every school's student uniform program must include:

- Incentives and positive reinforcement measures to encourage full compliance;
- Disciplinary measures that may be employed only after positive measures fail;
- A parent conference must be held prior to the imposition of disciplinary measures; and,
- In the interest of a smooth transition, no disciplinary measures may be employed until a school student uniform program has been in place for a period of six (6) school weeks.

34.06 Exemptions. No student shall be considered noncompliant with a school student uniform program in any of the following instances:

- a) when noncompliance derives from financial hardship;
- b) when a student wears a button, armband or other accouterment that is protected by the First Amendment as an exercise of free speech in the public school setting;
- c) when wearing the uniform violates a student's sincerely held religious beliefs; and,
- d) when the student wears the uniform of a nationally recognized youth organization such as the Boy Scouts or the Girl Scouts, or Junior ROTC uniforms on appointed days.

34.07 Communication. Prior to the implementation of a school student uniform program the Principal must cause the publication of a brochure that fully describes the student uniform program. The brochure must contain a detailed uniform description that lists the range of costs for each competitively priced item. The brochure must also describe the procedure for seeking financial assistance.