

ASSEMBLY, No. 920

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1996 SESSION

By Assemblymen ROCCO and DORIA

1 AN ACT authorizing local boards of education to adopt dress code
2 policies and supplementing chapter 11 of Title 18A of the New
3 Jersey Statutes.

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

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

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19 2. a. A board of education may adopt a dress code policy, which
20 may include a requirement that students wear a school uniform, if the
21 board approves a plan that is initiated by an individual school's
22 principal, staff, and parents and determines that the policy will enhance
23 the school learning environment.

24 b. If the dress code policy adopted by a board of education
25 requires students to wear a school uniform, the specific uniform
26 selected shall be determined by the principal, staff, and parents of the
27 individual school.

28 c. The board of education shall provide a method whereby parents
29 may choose not to comply with an adopted school uniform policy. A
30 student shall not be penalized academically or otherwise discriminated
31 against nor denied admittance to school if the student's parents choose
32 not to comply with the school uniform policy. The board of education
33 shall continue to have responsibility for the appropriate education of
34 such students.

35 d. A dress code policy adopted pursuant to this section shall not

1 preclude students that participate in a nationally recognized youth
2 organization which is approved by the board of education from
3 wearing organization uniforms to school on days that the organization
4 has scheduled a meeting.

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6 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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9 STATEMENT

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11 This bill authorizes boards of education to adopt dress code policies
12 which may include a requirement that students wear a school uniform.
13 The board would adopt the policy if it approves a plan that is initiated
14 by an individual school's principal, staff and parents and determines
15 that the policy will enhance the school learning environment. If the
16 adopted policy requires students to wear uniforms, the specific
17 uniform shall be selected by the principal, staff and parents.

18 The bill provides that if a board of education adopts a dress code
19 policy which requires students to wear a school uniform, the board
20 shall provide a method whereby parents may choose not to comply
21 with the uniform policy and stipulates that a student shall not be
22 penalized academically or otherwise if his parents choose not to
23 comply with the uniform policy. Nothing in the bill is to preclude
24 students that participate in a nationally recognized youth organization
25 from wearing organization uniforms to school on the day of scheduled
26 meetings.

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31 Authorizes boards of education to adopt dress code policies.