



# **Administrative Regulation 5106**

## **STUDENT UNIFORMS**

### **ADOPTION GUIDELINES FOR A SCHOOL SITE POLICY**

**Responsible Office:** Office of School Leadership

#### **PURPOSE**

This Administrative Regulation establishes the adoption guidelines for a school-site policy related to student uniforms in the Washoe County School District (District). The intent of a site-based student uniform policy is to generate an effective learning environment, create and maintain a favorable school image, and promote positive self-image among students.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

1. "Content-based exception" refers to an exception that is directly concerned with the content of the expression and is excepted because of the message, ideas, and/or subject matter of the clothing. Invalid content regulation includes not only exceptions on particular viewpoints, but also exceptions for an entire topic. Content based exceptions (clothing not allowed as an exception to the school uniform) include but are not limited to: Team clothing (i.e., football jerseys); and uniforms of outside organizations in lieu of the school uniform (i.e., boy scout uniform).
2. "Unprotected speech" may include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following: obscenity, fighting words, defamation (includes libel, slander), child pornography, perjury, blackmail, incitement to imminent lawless action, true threats, solicitations to commit crimes, and speech which is vulgar or profane. Unprotected speech may also include any article of apparel, or publication that displays obscene words, pictures, or designs; speech which has a message that is pro-alcohol, tobacco and/or controlled or illegal substances; publications, clothing, or items that symbolize gang-related behavior; speech that does not comply with the District's policies and regulations, interferes with the educational process and/or poses a threat to the safety of students or other individuals.

#### **REGULATION**

1. The Board of Trustees (Board) authorizes the Superintendent to allow District schools to establish a school-site policy that requires students to wear school uniforms. Schools that choose to adopt a site-based student uniform policy shall follow a collaborative, inclusive process.
2. In accordance with state law, each site-based policy shall:
  - a. Include a description of the uniform (i.e., colors, types of clothing);
  - b. Designate the hours or events during which the uniforms must be worn;  
and

- c. Describe the program of financial assistance for the acquisition of uniforms by parents/guardians.
3. The specific prohibitions and limitations of the District’s Student Dress Code shall remain in effect, consistent with any site-based school uniform policy adopted by a school.
4. Process for Adoption of a Site-Based Student Uniform Policy
  - a. In all aspects of this process, appropriate accommodations shall be provided to parents/guardians, to include interpreter services at meetings and translation of documents.
  - b. Initial Meeting. If a school is interested in implementing a student uniform policy, the principal shall convene a parent/employee/community meeting to discuss and receive input regarding the adoption of such a site-based policy. The District, through the Office of School Leadership (OSL), shall provide the principal or designee with informational materials and other support related to the adoption process.
  - c. Coordinating Committee:
    - i. If the principal finds there is sufficient interest in pursuing a student uniform policy, he/she shall determine the method for selecting parents/guardians, students, and employees to serve on a coordinating committee; and, the principal shall select the voting members of the committee.
    - ii. All meetings of the coordinating committee shall be open to the public. All reasonable efforts must be made to communicate the date, time, and location of meetings of the coordinating committee so that all impacted students, their families, and other members of the community are encouraged to attend.
    - iii. The committee shall consist of a minimum of 9 voting members, with non-staff parents/guardians constituting a majority of the committee members and being representative of the school’s ethnic diversity.
    - iv. The coordinating committee shall:
      - 1) Compile cost information.
      - 2) Communicate the proposal with parents/guardians, students, and employees to include, but not limited to:

- a. A minimum of two parent/guardian meetings and one employee meeting to discuss the proposal;
    - b. Communication of notice of the meeting(s) to parents/guardians through use of the District's telephone messaging system and electronic mail and, when possible, a postcard mailing; and
    - c. As available, the uniform selection process, meeting information, and the draft site-based policy shall be posted to the school's website for review by the school community.
  - 3) Submit the finalized proposal for school uniform options to the District's Office of Accountability. Office of Accountability shall create the final version of the Household Survey.
- v. Household Survey
- 1) To ensure an unbiased, fair, and consistent process, distribution and tabulation of the surveys will be facilitated through the District's Office of Accountability.
  - 2) One survey will be sent per family of the school that are eligible to vote (regardless of the number of students within that family) based on the student's primary address in the District's student records database. The District shall make every effort to provide a survey to all families of a student officially enrolled in the school.
    - a. Families eligible to vote refers to parents/guardians of students zoned for a school (i.e., current 5<sup>th</sup> graders who will be 6<sup>th</sup> graders for a middle school survey) and parents/guardians of students who currently attend the school. It does not include those students who will be exiting the school prior to implementation (i.e., current 8<sup>th</sup> graders for a middle school survey). The principal shall retain the discretion to determine inclusion of future students (i.e., students in pre-kindergarten); and
    - b. Any survey not returned by a pre-determined date shall be voided.

- 3) As possible, the survey will be distributed electronically. Every attempt will be made to attain the electronic mail address of the primary parent/guardian for the student (based on the student's primary parent/guardian contact in the District's student records database.) When mailing of a survey is necessary, the individual school shall be responsible for the cost of mailing. Other cost-effective forms of distribution may be considered, such as distribution through students.
  - 4) The survey shall pose the sole question as to whether parents/guardians support the school adopting a standard student uniform policy. Pro and con statements and a description of the proposed standard student uniform will be included on the survey.
  - 5) Results of the survey will be forwarded to the school principal, who shall be responsible for oversight of implementation of the site-based policy. Each of the following criteria must be met before the principal may submit the proposal for final approval to the Superintendent or designee:
    - a. A minimum of 10% of the families who were eligible to vote must respond to the survey;
    - b. Of those who respond to the survey, the proposal must be endorsed by more than 50% of the families who were eligible to vote; and
    - c. Of those who respond to the survey, in the case of a tie, the site-based policy will be extended for one year and the survey process, as outlined in this regulation, shall be conducted again the next school year.
  - 6) The completed surveys shall be made available to the public upon request.
- d. For schools adopting student uniforms for the first time, upon approval of adoption, by the Superintendent or designee, the principal shall schedule, within a reasonable period of time, an open information meeting for all families with students who attend the school to describe the program and discuss its implementation. The members of the coordinating committee should be in attendance to answer questions.

5. Appropriate Clothing for a School Uniform

- a. Schools that adopt a student uniform shall determine the dress code and color scheme during the survey process.
- b. All items of clothing must be in solid colors only with no patterns, no words, and no brand logos.
- c. School Logos:
  - i. Uniforms may include the school logo and school name;
  - ii. No other names or symbols, to include those related to school athletic teams, school clubs/activities/charitable organizations, or other groups/organizations may be on the clothing; and
  - iii. Non-logo'd shirts which meet all other uniform criteria shall be allowed.
- d. Outerwear. Colors and styles of outerwear, such as jackets and coats, are not required to meet the color/style specifications and are not covered under this regulation.
- e. Uniform bottoms, jeans, pants, and trousers:
  - i. Must be secured at waist level. Sagging is prohibited;
  - ii. May not have rips or tears that expose undergarments; and
  - iii. Must reach to mid-thigh or lower.
- f. Basic colors of khaki and black for uniform bottoms will be allowed at all schools with standard student uniforms. A maximum of two additional optional colors may be added based on the Committee's input.
- g. Uniform Categories. The Committee may choose selections from the categories below. The uniform options selected shall not be characterized as gender specific.
  - i. Tops
    - 1) Shirts in basic/optional colors (plain or with the school logo, long- or short-sleeved, with or without collar).
    - 2) Sweaters in basic/optional solid colors either worn alone as part of the uniform or not part of the uniform.

3) Sweatshirts in basic/optional colors (plain or school logo) either worn alone as part of the uniform or not part of the uniform.

4) Jumpers or dresses in basic/optional colors.

ii. Bottoms

1) Pants, shorts, leggings/jeggings/yoga pants, skirts, skorts in basic/optional colors (sized to fit).

2) Denim Pants (blue jeans) in basic/optional colors (sized to fit).

3) Sweatpants in basic/optional colors (sized to fit).

4) Tights in basic/optional colors worn under clothing.

iii. Miscellaneous

1) Ties in basic/optional colors.

6. Dissemination of the site-based policy decision

a. It shall be the responsibility of the school-site administration to disseminate information regarding adoption of a site-based student uniform policy, no later than the last day of the current school year. An information packet shall be distributed to all students that shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

i. Information on the policy;

ii. Options on articles of clothing, colors, etc.;

iii. How to order uniforms, including the names and addresses of vendors;

iv. Costs and available financial assistance programs; and

v. Enforcement guidelines.

b. The adopted site-based student uniform policy shall be posted to the school's website and, if possible, included in the school's student handbook.

7. Commencement of the school-site student uniform policy. A site-based student uniform policy shall be effective at the start of the school year following its adoption.

## 8. Sale of Uniforms

- a. The cost to parents/guardians for student uniforms should be the actual cost.
  - i. Any increase in the cost of the uniform for the purpose of school fundraising must be voluntary, clearly communicated to the parent/guardian, and comply with the District's student activity funds procedures.
- b. In some cases, an outside vendor may be selected to sell student uniforms. Every effort should be made to make clothing available that is both affordable and good quality.
- c. Financial assistance for the acquisition of school uniforms shall be made available for eligible parent(s)/guardian(s). This assistance can take the form of financial arrangements for payment, uniforms offered at a discount, or uniforms being donated or sold by students leaving the school.

## 9. Exceptions, Free Days, Spirit Days

- a. Uniforms, which are worn as a requirement of an academic program, (i.e., JROTC, certain internships, signature academies) are permitted.
- b. Free Days. Exceptions or allowances to the site-based policy, to include Spirit Days, may only occur on "free" days" or days when no student is mandated to wear the student uniform.
  - i. It is at the principal's discretion whether to permit special spirit days and free dress days for all students at the site.
  - ii. Such exceptions cannot benefit one group of students to the exclusion of another group. On such school sanctioned exception days, schools will notify the students and parents/guardians of the unique dress provisions.
- c. Schools may not charge students for free dress days, to include as part of fundraising activities or as a positive reward.
- d. The site-based policy shall not include content-based exceptions to the uniform requirements. Content based exceptions (clothing not allowed as an exception to the school uniform) include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Team clothing (i.e., football jerseys);
  - ii. Clothing which is related to a class, club or other activity (i.e., debate, strings);

- iii. Uniforms of outside organizations in lieu of the school uniform (i.e., Boy Scout uniform).

#### 10. Evaluation

- a. Schools shall evaluate the effectiveness of their policy every four years. Such evaluation shall consider continuation or cancellation of the uniform policy or a change to the existing uniform policy.
  - b. Schools who have implemented mandatory standard student uniforms will survey their community every fourth year, regardless of whether the intent is to continue the site-based policy or to terminate it.
  - c. The process outlined by this Administrative Regulation shall be used for such evaluation.
11. Once adopted a site-based student uniform policy shall be in place for four (4) years. Changes may only occur at the direction of the Superintendent or designee based on compliance with Board policy or state/federal laws or regulations.

#### 12. Miscellaneous

- a. Nothing in this Administrative Regulation shall be construed to restrict or ban a student's wearing of religious clothing and/or accessories, with the exception of unprotected speech. Parents/guardians having religious-based concerns regarding the dress code, or the site-based uniform policy are encouraged to discuss them with the principal. Any appeals of the principal's decision shall follow the District's public complaint process.

#### 13. Compliance Measures

- a. Each school shall develop positive reinforcement measures to encourage full compliance with the standard student uniform policy.
- b. In all cases of violations of the school uniform policy, the parent/guardian shall be notified, the student shall be informed of the consequences of subsequent violations, and the student must change the clothing violation. Inappropriate tops may not be covered with sheer shirts, sweatshirts, or jackets.
- c. A student who is found to be in violation of the school dress code may face consequences as outlined in the District's Behavior Matrix and Progressive Discipline Plan. No student shall receive a lowered academic grade as a result of not complying with this Administrative Regulation.



14. OSL shall ensure that all requirements of this Administrative Regulation and the associated policy and procedure have been met.

### **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This Administrative Regulation reflects the goals of the District’s Strategic Plan and aligns/complies with the governing documents of the District, to include:
  - a. Board Policy 5105, Student Uniforms – Adoption of a Site-Based Policy;
  - b. Administrative Procedure 5152, Guidelines for Regulating Student Speech; and
  - c. Administrative Regulation 5102, Student Dress Code.
2. This Administrative Regulation complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) to include:
  - a. Chapter 392, Pupils, and specifically:
    - i. NRS 392.458 Authorization to establish policy of uniforms for pupils and dress code for educational personnel; financial assistance for pupils to purchase uniforms.
3. This Administrative Regulation complies with federal laws and regulations, to include:
  - a. Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

### **REVIEW HISTORY**

Date	Revision	Modification
10/06/2014	1.0	Adopted
04/15/2015	2.0	Revised
01/11/2018	3.0	Revised: Removed gender specific options
05/28/2019	4.0	Revised: Changed number from 5105, added reference to student dress code, clarified voting process, clarified how regulation can be revised
07/19/2022	5.0	Revised: Updated process and clarified language