LODI UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Rule 5132

Students

Dress and Grooming

A. School Uniform Program Implementation Prerequisites and 6th/8th Grade Conditions

Before formally considering the development of a school uniform policy, the principal and school site council shall conduct an informal interest survey (Exhibit 5132A) among school families and site staff. If the results of the survey indicate a favorable response to the school uniform concept, it is recommended that the school hold an informal meeting for parents/guardians. At the 7-12 grade level, parents/guardians of incoming 7th and 9th grade students are to be included in the informational meeting.

This informational meeting should address Education Code 35183, Board Policy 5132, and the process for developing and implementing a school uniform policy at an individual site.

Following the informational meeting, a formal ballot shall be distributed to parents/guardians with a child/children who will be enrolled at the school (Exhibit 5132B) in the upcoming year and to all staff members (Exhibit 5132C). At the 7-12 grade level, parents/guardians of incoming 7th and 9th grade students are also to receive ballots. Parents/ guardians of 6th grade students will be eligible to vote at the middle school in which their child will be enrolled; parents/guardians of 8th grade students will be eligible to vote at the high school in which their child will be enrolled. These parents will not be eligible to vote at their current school in the 6th or 8th grade. Parents/guardians of 12th grade students will be ineligible to vote.

No individual school shall initiate a uniform program without a recorded demonstration of (Exhibit 5132D): 1) a simple majority of those eligible families with the child/children currently attending the school who have submitted their written preference for or against the proposed policy, and 2) two-thirds of the families voting on the issue are in favor of adopting the uniform policy. Each family shall have one (1) vote regardless of the number of children in attendance at the school. The results of the staff polling shall be utilized for information and consideration purposes only.

B. School Uniform Policy Development

After the two-thirds support for school uniforms is documented, the development of the school's uniform policy shall be a project of the School Site Council or an appointed subcommittee of the School Site Council. The School Site Council or

subcommittee thereof shall include representation of the principal, staff and parents. The School Uniform policy shall include the following:

- types and colors of uniform
- requirements of jackets/outer garments
- optional articles of attire, if any (shoes, hats, etc.)
- provisions for exemption set forth in Section E
- criteria for financial assistance for parents/guardians with needs
- means by which a uniform closet may be established
- methods to recycle clothes within the school community
- a detailed cost of the uniforms
- identified staff member or volunteer to assist with the procedures and respond to questions

The proposed School Uniform Policy shall be approved by the voting members of the School Site Council.

C. Board of Education Approval

Following approval by the School Site Council, the principal shall submit the proposed School Uniform Plan to the Board of Education for approval seven (7) months prior to proposed implementation.

D. Implementation

After receiving Board of Education approval of the School Uniform Policy, the principal or designee shall distribute written informational materials to the school community regarding the new policy. The material should include detailed information reflective of the approved policy.

The school community shall be notified of the School Uniform Policy not less than six (6) months prior to implementation. School sites are encouraged to educate parents through a variety of means, such as:

- school newsletters/bulletins
- Parent Club/PTA newsletters
- parent forums/informational meetings
- newspaper announcements
- fliers and posters
- registration materials
- First Day Packets

E. Exemptions

If a parent/guardian wishes to have their child exempted from the uniform policy, the parent/guardian must observe the following procedures:

1) Request in-person an Application for Exemption (Exhibit 5132E).
2) Complete the application and submit to the principal's office at the student's school.
3) Meet with the principal or administrative designee to discuss the School Uniform Policy and the reasons for the requested exemption.

F. Financial Considerations

No student shall be denied attendance at school, penalized, or otherwise subject to compliance measures for failing to wear a uniform by reason of financial hardship.

Upon request, an Application for Financial Aid for School Uniforms (Exhibit 5132F) shall be provided to families wishing to apply for financial assistance.

The School Uniform Plan shall include the type of assistance to be provided to those families declaring financial hardship, as well as the process by which they may obtain assistance.

Each school shall work with staff, volunteers, the local school and business communities to identify resources and strategies for assisting families declaring such hardship.

G. Compliance

Students are expected to wear uniforms daily unless otherwise stated in the School Uniform Policy.

No student shall be considered noncompliant with the School Uniform Policy in the following instances:

1. When noncompliance derives from financial hardship.
2. When a student wears the uniform of a recognized youth organization such as the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts on regular meeting days.
3. When a student wears the uniform of a school club or athletic program on designated days.
4. When wearing a school uniform violates a student's religious belief.
5. When a student wears a button, armband or other accouterment to exercise the right to freedom of expression as provided by Education Code 48907,

unless the button, armband or other accouterment signifies or is related to gangs, gang membership or gang activity as provided by Education Code 35183.

6. When a student's parent/guardian has secured an exemption from the School Uniform Policy by the procedures set forth in Section E.

A student who is not exempted from wearing the school uniform under this section, but who comes to school in other attire, must bring a note, written by his/her parent or guardian, explaining why the student is out of uniform on that particular day. In the event that a such a student is not compliant, the parent/guardian shall be contacted and the issue resolved. Exhibit 5132G may be used for parent notification.

H. New Students

New students at a school site shall be given twenty (20) school days from the date of enrollment to comply with the School Uniform Policy. Upon enrolling in a school, site staff shall provide the parent/guardian with the appropriate informational materials regarding the school's policy.

I. Evaluation

Schools shall participate in an evaluation at the end of each school year for the first three (3) years of the policy's implementation (Exhibits 5132H & 5132I). Thereafter, the evaluation of the School Uniform Policy shall be conducted every three (3) years. The evaluation shall be conducted among school families and site staff.

Each school shall complete its respective evaluation by February 15 and submit the results (Exhibit 5132J) to the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education or the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education. The school and the administrative director shall consider modifications to the School Uniform Policy as appropriate.

J. Rescission

If it appears that a substantial number of parents are dissatisfied with an adopted uniform program as evidenced by the evaluation due February 15 (in the first three years), or by other feedback indicators (in subsequent years), then the principal shall arrange for a parent forum to explore the complaints/problems, and the School Site Council or appointed subcommittee thereof shall consider the need for a new vote on the issue.

If the School Site Council/subcommittee so recommends, a vote shall again be conducted among school families in the manner described in Section A prior to March 31 (Exhibit 5132 K and L shall be utilized when considering a rescission of

the policy at a school site). If the School Uniform Policy fails to receive the support of a two-thirds majority of the families who vote, and if a simple majority of families submit a vote, the Board of Education shall consider rescinding the policy at that school at the first Board of Education meeting in April.

Parents and students must be informed of the Board of Education's action to rescind the uniform program at that school by the end of April. Should the balloting process prevent this deadline from being met, the rescission will be considered within the next school year.

The Board shall also rescind a School Uniform Policy without a prior vote if such an action, in the opinion of the Board, would be in the best interest of the school's students and site personnel.

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