

Students

Resolution - Mandating Student Uniforms

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has received public testimony from students, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, local law enforcement officials, experts on gang activities, and educational experts; and

WHEREAS, this evidence has clearly shown the following to be true about gangs:

gangs are a major presence in the community which Calumet City School District 155 serves, including children as young as those in the early elementary grades;

gang activities and gang recruitment are an actual and present threat to the safety, health, morals, and education of District 155 students;

gangs in this community tend to place heavy emphasis on clothing and clothing accessories as a means of identification, recruitment, and establishing territorial supremacy;

the clothing and clothing accessories utilized by gangs are subject to continuous and frequent change;

keeping pace with the current state of gang identification in clothing and clothing accessories is exceedingly difficult and time-consuming for school officials whose professional activities are better spent delivering educational services to students; and

the use of student uniforms greatly decreases the ability of gangs to operate among students at school;

WHEREAS, this evidence has clearly shown the following to be true about clothing fashions and peer pressure among students:

students in District 155, similar to elementary students in other communities, tend to place an inordinate emphasis and value on designer clothes, starter jackets, jewelry, brand athletic shoes, and other clothing and clothing accessories as evidence of self-worth and societal status, at the expense of student achievement;

many families of District 155 students have limited financial means to support peer pressure and fashion competition present among students;

peer pressure and fashion competition to wear new, expensive, and frequently changing styles in clothing and clothing accessories have resulted in student harassment, taunting, thefts, fighting, and other distractions from learning; and

such peer pressure and fashion competition are an actual and present threat to the education of District 155 students.

WHEREAS, the District has experimented with 1 year of a policy suggesting voluntary use of student uniforms, an experience which has shown both the value of uniforms in decreasing the disruptions due to gangs and fashion competition, as well as the need for mandatory uniforms in order to deal more effectively with those disruptions;

WHEREAS, uniforms worn on a voluntary basis during the past year has been least at the junior high level, the grade level where gang activity and fashion competition is the most disruptive;

WHEREAS, the Administration has consulted with and received the input of parents, who overwhelmingly recommend a policy of mandatory student uniforms;

WHEREAS, the Administration, through educational consultants and based upon the past year's experience with voluntary uniform has developed a recommended uniform which meets the goals of simplicity, cost-efficiency, neatness, and modesty;

WHEREAS, a policy requiring a mandatory student uniforms should also include reasonable accommodations to students' religious beliefs, health requirements, and political expressions; and

WHEREAS, a policy requiring of mandatory student uniforms should provide for a process of continuous re-evaluation of the need and effectiveness of the uniform requirements;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT AND THE SAME IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Education of Calumet City School District 155, Cook County, Illinois, as follows:

Section 1. The recitals above are adopted as findings of the Board.

Section 2. The Board of Education hereby adopts a policy mandating student uniforms as attached hereto.

Section 3. The Superintendent shall take appropriate measures to advise students, parents, and the community of the implementation of this policy and the justification for the same.

Section 4. The Superintendent shall provide assistance to parents in locating vendors where clothing meeting the uniform requirements may be found and in guiding parents without their own financial means to purchase uniforms by alternative means, such as parent organizations or retailers willing to contribute toward the purchase of uniforms.

Section 5. The Superintendent shall report annually to the Board before the end of each school year the extent of the compliance with this policy, its effect in reducing disruptions due to gang activities and fashion competition, and any recommended modifications in the policy.

Section 6. This resolution shall take effect upon its adoption except that the policy shall be implemented with the beginning of the 1996-1996 school year.

Adopted this 25th day of April, 1996, by the following roll call vote of the Board of Education of School District 155, Cook County, Illinois:

AYES: Wiening, Daley, Styka, Uzoras, Anders

NAYS: Garrison

ABSENT: Sellers

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT 155

By:

**President
Debbie Anders**

ATTEST:

**Secretary Pro-tem
Jeannette A. Wiening**

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