

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

The Rochester City School District does not encourage or discourage school uniforms; however, school communities may adopt policies on school uniforms at the school level, consistent with the law.

Guidelines for Site Uniform Policies

The intent of a school uniform policy is to help avoid the disruption of the classroom atmosphere and decorum and prevent disturbances among students. Other purposes include:

1. Promote a more effective climate for learning.
2. Create opportunities for self-expression
3. Increase campus safety and security
4. Foster school unity and pride
5. Eliminate label competition
6. Ensure modest dress
7. Minimize costs to parents and to level socioeconomic barriers

A policy may be developed by the principal or parent group at each individual school.

The purchase of the school uniform is the financial responsibility of the parent. The Rochester City School District cannot pay for school uniforms as it would be considered a gift of public funds and would be against the State Education Department Regulations.

The Board notes that State law limits the authority of schools to require uniforms for students, thus parents can apply for exemptions. For example, the parent of any student who may not be able to comply with a school's uniform policy for financial reasons or for religious reasons should advise the principal that obtaining the required uniform will present a financial burden or an infringement on religious freedom. No student will be denied an education due to the inability of such student to obtain clothing that complies with a school's uniform policy. The Education Law prohibits suspension or other removal from class for violations of a uniform policy.

The principal, if able but not with public funds, may assist the student in obtaining clothes that comply with the uniform policy.

Ref: *Lipsman v New York City Bd of Educ.*, 1999 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 3574 (S.D.N.Y. Mar. 23, 1999) (re: prohibiting suspension or removal from class for violating a school uniform policy)

Ref: *Appeal of LaLonde*, 31 Ed Dept Rep 408 (1992) (prohibits using public funds for the benefit of private groups or individuals)

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