

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>UNIFORM CLOTHING FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS</b>	<b>4.203</b>

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-1-302, local boards of education may adopt and enforce a policy for uniform clothing for public school students. Local uniform clothing policies shall comply with the following requirements.

1. School uniform clothing shall be simple, appropriate, readily available, and inexpensive.
2. School uniform policies shall adhere to state and federal law, including:
  - a. Protecting a student’s religious expression. A school uniform policy must accommodate students whose religious beliefs are substantially burdened by a uniform requirement.
  - b. Protecting student’s other rights of expression. A school uniform policy may not prohibit students from wearing or displaying expressive items, so long as such items do not independently contribute to disruption by substantially interfering with discipline or with the rights of others.<sup>1</sup>
  - c. Not requiring students to wear a message. A school uniform policy shall not impose a form of expression on students by requiring them to wear uniforms bearing a substantive message, such as a political message.
3. School districts shall assist families that need financial help. School districts with uniform policies should make provisions for students whose families are unable to afford uniforms. This may include the district:
  - a. Providing uniforms to students who cannot afford to purchase them;
  - b. Forming partnerships with community and business leaders to provide uniforms or contribute financial support for uniforms;
  - c. Encouraging school parents to work together to make uniforms available for economically disadvantaged students; and
  - d. Collecting used uniforms from graduates to make available for incoming students.

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, a uniform policy may prohibit students from wearing a button bearing a gang insignia.