

Mr. Roberto J. Alonso, Board Member

Co-Sponsors: Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Chair
Ms. Monica Colucci, Vice Chair
Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall
Ms. Mary Blanco
Mr. Danny Espino
Ms. Luisa Santos

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SUBJECT: REQUEST TO EXPLORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DISTRICT WIDE MANDATORY UNIFORMS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: INFORMED, ENGAGED, & EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Miami Dade County Public Schools has always put the safety of our students and faculty our number one priority. In 2021, the National Library of Medicine published a manuscript written by fellow educators citing that school uniforms are often viewed as a way of mitigating risks to vulnerable populations, including fear of intimidation and discrimination. In addition to safety considerations, school uniforms have other proposed benefits such as increased student discipline, increased respect for teachers, promotion of group spirit, higher academic standards maintained through uniformity, decreased strain on parental budgets, and a decrease in student's concerns for social status through fashion.

In accordance with School Board Policy 5511, Dress Code and School Uniforms, all students in grades K-8 (elementary school, K-8 Centers, and middle schools) are required to participate in a mandatory school uniform program. The purpose of this program is to promote a safe and supportive learning environment and improve school safety and discipline. Further, Fla. Stat. 1011.78 created a student attire incentive payment program, announcing legislative intent for our students to be in uniforms.

In response to our commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and conducive learning environment, this item seeks to explore the expansion of mandatory school uniforms for all grade levels. This initiative is guided by the belief that a standardized dress code will enhance school safety while providing a sense of unity and school branding while promoting a consistent discipline policy and safety among our students. This initiative aligns with our district's mission to provide a safe and equitable educational setting. School uniforms not only minimize distractions and reduce socio-economic disparities but also foster a strong sense of belonging among students.

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In accordance with our policies and state law, every school participating in the mandatory uniform program shall establish a uniform committee that adequately represents administrators, teachers, students, and parents. A school may utilize the Educational Excellence School Advisory Council (EESAC) for this purpose, or they may choose a separate committee.

Furthermore, it is crucial for the success of this initiative that these new policies be held to enforce the policies as decided. To ensure the maximum result is achieved, it is imperative there are guidelines to guide our administrators in an efficient manner. The district shall also explore the licensing of school logos on uniforms as an effort to create an incentive program to benefit school sites.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the Office of the General Counsel as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MR. ROBERTO J. ALONSO:**

That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, request that the Superintendent of Schools in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel, to;

1. review existing District uniform policy for Pre-K-12 grades;
2. to explore the feasibility of creating a consistent district wide uniform policy that covers Pre-K-12;
3. if feasible, work to establish guidelines for local EESAC's to adopt consistent school uniforms for their local school; and
4. if feasible, district administration is to develop a progressive disciplinary plan for schools to follow in an effort to uniformly enforce compliance district wide for all students; and
5. report back to the Board, with relevant findings and recommended options, at the February 7, 2024, Personnel, Student, School & Community Support Committee Meeting.