

July 27, 2000
OPINION No. 00-280

**94 – SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS – Administration,
Government and Officers**

Honorable Gary L. Smith, Jr.
State Representative
District No. 56
P. O. Box 189
Norco, LA 70079

LSA-R. S. 17:416.7

In light of the law and Attorney General Opinion Number 98-195, the St. Charles Parish School Board may implement a mandatory school uniform policy for the entire Parish or on a school-by-school basis. The St. Charles Parish School Board has broad discretion in determining a mandatory school uniform policy for the public school students within its school system.

Dear Representative Smith:

I am in receipt of your request for an Attorney General's opinion concerning the St. Charles Parish Public School Board enacting a mandatory public school uniform policy. The policy mandates that public school students in grades K-12 shall be required to wear official school uniforms, beginning with the 2000-2001 school session. Specifically, you questioned:

1. Whether the St. Charles Parish School Board may implement a mandatory school uniform policy for the entire Parish?
2. Whether the St. Charles Parish School Board may implement a mandatory school uniform policy on a school-by-school basis?

LSA-R.S. 17:416.7 addresses a parish school boards authority to mandate a school dress policy. It reads:

Each city or parish school board may adopt such rules and regulations as it deems necessary to require a school dress code which includes the use of uniforms. Each school may select a uniform for its students and display such uniform prior to the beginning of each school year. If a city or parish school board chooses to require a school dress code as provided in this Section, it shall notify, in writing, the parent or guardian of each school student of the dress code specifications and their effective date. Nothing herein shall require the additional expenditure of school or school board funds.

LSA-R.S. 17:416.7 was amended as stated above in 1997. Before the amendment, parish school boards were not allowed to mandate a school uniform

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policy. Attorney General Opinion Number 98-195 addressed the current status of the law and the 1997 amendment. That opinion concluded that the law authorizes "local school boards to adopt whatever policy in the area of a school dress code it deems necessary." It goes further to explain that the only restriction placed on the school board by this law concerns written notification to the student's parent or guardian. A copy of Attorney General Opinion No. 98-195 is attached for your convenience.

In light of the law and Attorney General Opinion Number 98-195, the St. Charles Parish School Board may implement a mandatory school uniform policy for the entire Parish or on a school-by-school basis. The St. Charles Parish School Board has broad discretion in determining a mandatory school uniform policy for the public school students within its school system.

Very truly yours,

RICHARD P. IEYOUNG
ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: _____
Veronica L. Howard
Assistant Attorney General

RPI:VLH:lrs

Enclosures

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DATE REQUESTED:

DATE RELEASED: July 27, 2000

**VERONICA L. HOWARD
ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL**