

HOW TO BECOME A NO SWEAT SCHOOL

*A guide to winning and enforcing
an anti-sweatshop purchasing policy*

**Maquila
Solidarity
Network**

THE NO SWEAT CAMPAIGN

In 2000, the Ethical Trading Action Group (ETAG) launched the No Sweat campaign to promote the adoption of ethical purchasing policies by Canadian public institutions such as high schools, universities, and municipal governments, and mobilize public support for changes in federal textile labelling regulations to require apparel companies to publicly disclose the name and addresses of factory locations. The campaign aims to open the door for industry-wide changes in how our clothes are made - from abusive working conditions hidden behind closed doors to humane conditions open to public scrutiny.

ETAG is a coalition of faith, labour, student, teacher and non-governmental organizations advocating for government policies, voluntary codes of conduct and ethical purchasing policies that promote humane labour practices based on accepted international labour standards. ETAG promotes greater public access to information on where and under what conditions clothes, shoes and other consumer products are made, and greater transparency in monitoring and verification of company compliance with international labour standards and local laws. The Maquila Solidarity Network acts as the secretariat for ETAG.

ETAG includes: Canadian Auto Workers, Canadian Council for International Cooperation, Canadian Labour Congress, KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, Maquila Solidarity Network, Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, Oxfam Canada, Steelworkers Humanity Fund, Students Against Sweatshops-Canada, and UNITE (Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees).

The Maquila Solidarity Network (MSN) promotes solidarity with the efforts of garment workers in Mexico, Central America, Africa and Asia to defend their rights and improve their working and living conditions. MSN plays a leading role in Canada's growing Stop Sweatshops movement of faith, student, women's, labour, international development, and community organizations and concerned individuals. Through educational workshops and distribution of information, analysis and campaign materials, MSN raises awareness of sweatshop abuses in Canada and internationally. Through corporate campaigns, MSN mobilizes public pressure on retailers and brand-name apparel companies to clean up sweatshop abuses.

Maquila Solidarity Network
606 Shaw Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6G 3L6
416-532-8584 (phone)
416-532-7688 (fax)
info@maquilasolidarity.org
www.maquilasolidarity.org

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[INTRODUCTION]

How to Become a No Sweat School is designed as a campaign guide for students, teachers, support staff, faith groups, parents and school board staff and trustees who want to make sure school clothing is made under humane working conditions. We hope teachers will also find many sections of the Guide effective tools for use in the classroom.

The Guide includes information and resources for those directly involved in local No Sweat campaigns and the development No Sweat policies.

“Building Your School No Sweat Campaign” outlines the various steps in a campaign to win school board approval for a motion to adopt a No Sweat policy. “Implementing Your No Sweat Policy” sets out the key components of a No Sweat policy and describes the issues and challenges involved in effectively implementing the policy.

The “No Sweat Tool Kit” includes campaign tools which can be adapted or simply photocopied and used as handouts in your campaigns, as educational tools for classroom use, and as resource materials for developing your No Sweat policies.

Campaign Tools #1-4 are handouts, action tools and educational resources for classroom use.

The “Model No Sweat School Board Purchasing Policy” (Campaign Tool #5) provides model language for minimum

labour standards provisions, definitions of key terms used in the policy and implementation procedures. Don’t be put off by the formal language. Once you acquaint yourself with the Model Policy, you’ll realize how important it is for your policy to include specific language to cover all situations.

“Web Resources to Assist Your Campaign” (Campaign Tool #6) provides a list of websites for research and education on sweatshop issues and No Sweat campaigns.

Another important resource you should consult during your campaign is our Maquila Solidarity Network website. Please visit the site for the most up-to-date information on ethical purchasing policies, No Sweat campaigns across Canada, as well as new educational resources: www.maquilasolidarity.org.

We hope the materials in the Guide will help you and your organization or coalition win a No Sweat policy and become a No Sweat school. Good luck on your campaign. Keep us informed on your progress so that we can share that information with others.

Maquila Solidarity Network
October 2003

[1. THE BASICS:]

WHY A NO SWEAT POLICY?

Ever wonder whether your school uniform or other school clothes were made in sweatshops or under humane working conditions?

Sweatshop abuses are common in countries around world producing clothing for the Canadian market. Even in Canada, sweatshops are making a comeback. Despite major challenges, the workers who make our clothing are organizing to improve their lives. With our support, they can win decent wages and working conditions.

You Have the Power to Make a Difference

Your school doesn't have to support sweatshop practices. Students and teachers across Canada are organizing campaigns at their schools in support of garment workers who are fighting for justice.

No Sweat campaigns call on school clothing manufacturers to take responsibility for working conditions in factories making school clothes and provide evidence that those clothes are sweat-free.

Students, teachers and support staff are asking their school boards to adopt No Sweat policies to make sure all school clothing is made under decent conditions. Through these actions, they are helping eliminate sweatshop abuses in the global garment industry.

WHAT IS A SWEATSHOP?

Sweatshop conditions include excessive working hours, forced overtime, poverty wages, child labour, unsafe working conditions, discrimination, verbal and physical abuse. When workers try to organize a union, they are often fired.

When your school board adopts a No Sweat policy, it can ask school clothing suppliers to report to the board and the

public the names and addresses of the factories where school clothes are made. The board can also request annual reports on the suppliers' progress in meeting the minimum labour stand-

ards in the No Sweat policy. With this information, it will be easier to find out whether workers sewing school clothing are treated fairly and easier to support workers' efforts to improve working conditions and gain respect for their rights.

Join the campaign

Some school boards have already adopted No Sweat policies. Others have agreed to develop policies. If you take action now, your school board could be next!

For more information, check out the MSN website at: www.maquilasolidarity.org.

A No Sweat Policy would require companies supplying clothing to your school to respect local laws and international labour standards, publicly report where their products are made, and cooperate with factory investigations when there are reports of worker rights abuses.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Should my school only buy clothing made in Canada?

Unfortunately, the “Made in Canada” label is no guarantee that clothes were made under humane working conditions. Even in Canada, many garment workers are paid below the legal minimum wage, work under unhealthy conditions and face harassment if they try to stand up for their rights.

Workers around the world deserve fair wages and working conditions. A No Sweat policy promotes better working conditions for workers in every factory manufacturing your school clothing, whether in Africa, Asia, Latin America or Canada.

Should I ask my school board to boycott certain companies?

Boycotting a specific brand won’t necessarily lead to better working conditions, and could harm the workers we want to support. Asking companies for proof that they are taking responsibility for the conditions under which their products are made is a better approach.

A No Sweat policy requires companies to take steps to improve working conditions, and report on the progress they are making. Schools should only stop placing orders with a company when it is unwilling to clean up reported abuses, knowingly provides false information or refuses to commit to the policy.

Will asking for improved conditions mean the cost of clothing will go up?

Workers’ wages are a tiny fraction of the final retail price of a piece of clothing. Making sure that workers sewing the

school products you wear are paid a fair wage shouldn’t greatly affect the price you pay as a consumer. Clothing can be both affordable and made under humane conditions. Our schools should choose clothes sold at the lowest *responsible* price - not at a price that can only be met by using sweatshops.

What can I do to make sure school clothing suppliers respect workers’ rights?

You can join with others in requesting that your school board adopt a No Sweat policy in order to ensure that workers making school uniforms and other school clothes are not exploited. Because uniform and other school clothing manufacturers want to continue supplying your school, they will likely cooperate with a No Sweat policy. Through the No Sweat policy, you will help to improve conditions for workers making clothes for your school.

What’s in a No Sweat policy?

An effective No Sweat purchasing policy, which could be adopted by your school board, would require that all companies making school, athletic and caretaker staff uniforms would have to:

- Respect the rights of the workers who make the uniforms and other school clothes;
- Publicly report the locations of the factories producing for your school;
- Provide annual reports to the school board and the public on what they are doing to meet the standards of the policy;
- Co-operate with investigations of supply factories when there are reports

of workers rights abuses; and

- Take action to eliminate sweatshop abuses when they are discovered.

(For more details, see “Key Elements of a No Sweat policy”, Campaign Tool #1.)

Will a No Sweat policy really make a difference?

Absolutely. In 2001, US university students learned that hundreds of garment workers in a factory in Mexico making university sweatshirts were fired for protesting poverty wages and rotten cafeteria food. Students called on their universities, many of which had No Sweat policies, to pressure factory management to respect the workers’ rights. With the support of US students, faculty and administrators, the workers won an independent union and negotiated better wages and working conditions. The workers credit No Sweat policies and the student campaign with helping achieve their victory.

HOMEWORKERS:

Homeworkers sew clothes in their own homes, often using their own equipment. In many cases, they sew clothes for major retailers and brands. Rather than being paid by the hour, they are usually paid for the number of pieces of clothing they sew (piece rate). They often work long hours for less than the minimum wage, and don’t receive legally required benefits.

What are garment workers doing to improve their situation?

Garment workers around the world are organizing to win decent wages and working conditions.

In Toronto, Canada, Chinese homeworkers formed the Toronto Homeworkers’ Association in 1992. The association provides health and safety training, English as a Second Language classes, and legal support. The association allows homeworkers to respond to their problems as a group, rather than as isolated individuals.

In Lesotho, a small country in Southern Africa, workers sewing clothing for Zellers and the Gap staged protests inside their factories against bad working conditions, including forced overtime, poverty wages, locked emergency exits, verbal and physical abuse and sexual harassment. With the support of MSN, ETAG, and other groups in Canada, the US and Europe, the workers won the right to have a union, and negotiated improvements in working conditions.

SO, AS A STUDENT, I CAN HELP THE PEOPLE SEWING MY SCHOOL CLOTHING TO WIN BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS. BUT I’M A WORKER TOO...

Some retail workers, many of whom are students, are pressured to work extra hours for no pay, or for less overtime pay than required by law.

Although it isn’t easy to criticize your employer, you have the right to statutory (legally required) benefits and a safe workplace. Many young people are learning about their rights at work and gaining the confidence to speak out and file complaints with their provincial labour board when their rights are violated.

For more information about your rights, check out these two websites:

- Ontario Federation of Labour Youth Committee: <http://www.ofl-fto.on.ca/youth/>
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Young Workers’ Zone: <http://www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/>

[2. ACTION GUIDE:]

BUILDING YOUR SCHOOL NO SWEAT CAMPAIGN

Get Informed

The first step in a No Sweat campaign is learning about the clothes your school buys or requires you to buy.

- Does your school have uniforms, gym clothes or sports jerseys?
- Do the caretakers in your school also have uniforms?
- Does your school special order any other clothes during the year?

Check the labels on these clothes. Write down the brands, the countries where they are made and the CA registration numbers on the labels. (See the No Sweat Information Sheet, Campaign Tool #2.)

Check to see if any of the clothes are made in countries where worker rights abuses are the norm. Visit the MSN website to learn about common worker rights abuses in different countries.

Find out who is in charge of ordering and purchasing school clothing and/or negotiating contracts with school uniform suppliers. If you are a student, ask a teacher or school administrative staff person to help you contact the people in charge. Find out whether the school or school board currently has a purchasing policy that sets ethical or other conditions for clothing purchases. Even if the current purchasing policy doesn't include minimum labour standards, that policy can be used as the basis for developing a No Sweat policy.

Get Connected

The second step is to involve others in your campaign. Organize a group at your school to lobby your school board to adopt a No Sweat policy. Then reach out to other organizations at your school and in the community, asking them to support or participate in your campaign.

Groups and individuals that might be interested in supporting or working with you include union locals representing teachers, caretaker and support staff; student council and student clubs; and parents and parent organizations.

These organizations and individuals can also help make contacts with other potential supporters outside your school, such as unions representing garment workers in your city, international development organizations, faith groups and religious orders, the local labour council, immigrant advocacy groups, and sympathetic school board members.

If you have friends at other schools in the community, see if they will start No Sweat groups. Even some retailers or garment manufacturers opposed to sweatshop practices might support your campaign.

Building a broad coalition of people and organizations who will work on or stand behind your campaign will help you convince your school board to adopt a No Sweat policy.

But remember, when you ask local unions or community organizations to support your campaign, also ask how you can support their efforts to defend the rights of workers, women and people of colour in your community. Solidarity is a two-way street.

Get Moving

Once you've set up a No Sweat group at school and have built connections with other organizations, it's time to take action. Organize events to raise awareness about sweatshop issues and build support for a No Sweat policy. Educate students, parents and teachers, recruit new members to your group, have fun, and gain the attention of your school board by doing one or more of the following activities:

- Organize a workshop with speakers and a video.
- Stage a sweatshop fashion show (See www.maquilasolidarity.org).
- Design and distribute a No Sweat zine. (A zine is an underground magazine which is independently produced.)
- Create a campaign website.
- Design and sell buttons, stickers and/or T-shirts promoting your campaign.
- Work with your student council to organize a No Sweat dance.
- Collect signatures on petitions and present them to your school board. (See the No Sweat sample petition, Campaign Tool #3.)
- Invite organizations and individuals to write letters of support to the school board chairperson. (See Sample Letter to School Board, Campaign Tool #4.)

From School to School Board

After lots of work and organizing, you've won support at your school for a No Sweat policy. Students, teachers, unions, faith and community groups, and even your school principal have endorsed your campaign, and some of them have agreed to work with you to convince the School Board to adopt a No Sweat policy. Petitions have been collected and letters of support have been sent to the School Board chairperson.

Now you're ready to talk with the school board.

The first step is to contact one or more sympathetic school board trustees to discuss your campaign and how they can support it. Many school boards also have a student trustee. Be sure to contact him/her as well. Invite a teacher and member of a community or faith group to a meeting with the sympathetic trustees.

Bring a copy of the model policy as well as information on policies adopted by other school boards. Be prepared to answer questions about how the policy will work and how it will help improve conditions for garment workers.

Supportive trustees can give you advice on who else you need to talk with on the school board and among its staff to ensure that they understand and support your proposal before it comes to a vote. With that information, members of your coalition can divide up the list and begin to contact key trustees and school board staff.

Making Your Case

Once you have made contact with key trustees and school board staff, send a letter to the school board requesting an op-

portunity to make a presentation about the No Sweat policy at their next meeting.

The letter will be more effective if it is signed by the different members of your coalition - students, teachers, parents, unions, and faith groups. The endorsement of your school principal will also help your case.

Ask your most supportive school board trustee and student trustee to help ensure that your presentation gets on the agenda of an upcoming board meeting. Also ask them to talk with other school board trustees before the meeting to seek their support.

The school board meeting will be your opportunity to make your case for a No Sweat policy and to show that different members of the community support the proposal. Involve students, teachers, faith leaders and others in the presentation to the board. This is also an opportunity to present the signed petitions you've collected as well as letters from supportive organizations and prominent individuals who couldn't make the meeting.

Remember, sweatshop issues may be new to the trustees, so think of creative ways to make your points. For example, visit www.maquilasolidarity.org to learn how to present a "No Sweat Clothesline."

And don't forget to draw upon the experiences of other school boards and other public institutions that have adopted No Sweat policies to explain the essential elements of the No Sweat policy and how it would be implemented. (See "Key Elements of a No Sweat Policy," Campaign Tool #1.)

Ask parents, teachers' unions, student associations, immigrant rights groups, union locals, faith groups, and supportive companies to attend the meeting and voice their support for your proposal.

And before you make your presentation, remember to contact the local media and provide them with copies of your brief, including the Model No Sweat Policy, letters from key supporters, background information on your proposal, examples of No Sweat policies adopted by other school boards, and information on sweatshop practices in the garment industry. If your school board is Catholic, contact reporters with the Catholic media.

Winning School Board Support

Getting a No Sweat policy approved takes time. Before the actual policy is developed and adopted, the trustees will probably pass a motion in favour of adopting a No Sweat policy. One of your supportive trustees should be prepared to put forward a motion to develop a No Sweat policy, and another ready to second the motion. The motion might be debated and voted on at the meeting to which you make your presentation, or it might be deferred to a future meeting.

Make sure the motion commits the school board to adopting an effective No Sweat purchasing policy, and isn't just a general statement about taking a stand against sweatshops.

If a committee is set up to draft a No Sweat policy, make sure to request that the committee include students, teachers, parents, and faith or community group representatives, as well as trustees and school board staff.

Don't be discouraged if the vote on the motion is postponed to a future meeting, since that will give you more time to lobby trustees and staff.

Invite coalition member groups and other supporters to phone or write letters to trustees prior to the next meeting.

[3. IMPLEMENTING]

YOUR NO SWEAT POLICY

The Campaign's Not Over

Congratulations, your school board has adopted a No Sweat motion! The next step is to develop and implement a No Sweat purchasing policy. School board staff will likely be assigned to coordinate the development of the policy. To ensure that an acceptable policy and effective implementation program are adopted, you need to make sure that key groups that helped win the motion, including members of your coalition, are represented at the table.

This is a critical time for your coalition. Some members may feel that winning a No Sweat motion marks the end

of the campaign. As well, policy development and implementation aren't as exciting as campaigning to win a policy. But the participation of your coalition in developing the policy is extremely important; it's your opportunity to help shape the policy and how it will be implemented.

A Credible No Sweat Policy

There's no need to create a No Sweat policy from scratch. Why reinvent the wheel when internationally accepted minimum labour standards are already spelled out in the Declarations of the United Nations (UN) and the Conven-

KEEP YOUR COALITION AND THE PUBLIC INFORMED

When representatives of your coalition begin meeting with school board officials to develop the No Sweat policy, there's a danger that your representatives could lose touch with the people and organizations that helped to win the No Sweat motion. It is therefore very important that they continue to report back to coalition members and supporters and seek their input on decisions that will need to be made to achieve consensus on the policy.

You may also find that public support will once again be needed at key moments in your discussions because you may be unable to reach agreement on important issues with School Board trustees and staff. For that reason, you should maintain contact with organizations that supported your campaign and reporters who have been following the story.

With continuing public interest in your campaign, trustees will know your group is serious and will feel compelled to develop meaningful standards for clothing purchases. Businesses supplying your school clothing will also be paying attention during the policy development process. Some may voice their opposition to the policy or to certain requirements in the policy.

To win an effective and transparent policy, you may have to once again demonstrate that there is broad support in the community for a policy that seriously addresses community concerns about the problem of sweatshop abuses.

tions of the International Labour Organization (ILO)¹, an agency of the UN?

The model No Sweat policy (Campaign Tool #5) is based on these Declarations and Conventions. It includes language and definitions on internationally recognized labour standards, as well as clauses on implementing the policy and what to do when violations are discovered.

Read through the Model Policy to acquaint your coalition with the language and requirements.

Many universities, school boards and municipalities across North America have already adopted similar policies, or are in the process of developing them, so you're not alone. For examples of No Sweat policies adopted by Canadian and US public institutions, visit www.maquilasolidarity.org/nosweat

The Bottom Line - International Standards

Despite the fact that the model policy is based on internationally accepted standards, don't be surprised if some trustees, school board staff or local business people question the validity or applicability of the minimum labour stand-

ards in the model No Sweat policy.

An effective policy will require school clothing suppliers and their subcontractors² to ensure that the factories they own and/or use abide by local labour laws and internationally accepted labour standards outlined in the Declarations of United Nations and the Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

It's better for workers, school suppliers and factory owners if the standards are similar for every school board.

These standards include:

- No Forced Labour;
- No Child Labour;
- No Harassment or Abuse;
- No Discrimination;
- Limits on Hours of Work;
- Health and Safety Protections; and
- The right of workers to Freedom of Association and to Bargain Collectively.³

The better policies also require payment of a living wage⁴ by local standards, and prohibit specific forms of discrimination against women workers.

Experience shows that companies prefer lower standards than those in the

¹ **International Labour Organization (ILO):** The ILO is an agency of the United Nations that includes representatives of trade unions, employers' organizations and governments from almost every country in the world. The ILO sets out minimum labour standards in Conventions, which member countries are encouraged to sign and promote. You can obtain copies of all ILO Conventions on the ILO website: www.ilo.org.

² **Subcontractors:** Many factories producing clothing send orders or assembly work to smaller factories and even to women sewing in homes. This is known as subcontracting. A No Sweat policy should apply to all factories and workshops involved in the production of your school's clothing.

³ **Freedom of Association and the right to bargain collectively** mean that workers are free to form or join unions of their choice and to negotiate as a group with their employers about wages, hours and other conditions of employment.

⁴ **Living Wage:** A living wage allows workers to provide for their basic needs and those of their family. A living wage is usually higher than the country's legal minimum wage, which is often set at a very low level.

model policy; that way, they don't have to make improvements in the conditions under which their products are made. But remember, to be effective, the No Sweat policy must be based on accepted international labour standards. A policy that allows "business as usual" won't help eliminate sweatshop abuses.

Key Elements of an Effective No Sweat Policy

A No Sweat policy is intended to produce positive results with a minimum amount of burden on the School Board for administration and enforcement; the

See *Key Elements of a No Sweat Policy (Campaign Tool #1)*, a two-page handout to circulate to supporters in your committee and/or to school board members.

onus is on the apparel companies to provide evidence that they are complying with the policy.

Once the No Sweat policy is adopted, companies that provide clothing for the school board will

be required to sign an agreement to abide by the conditions and requirements set out in the policy. This agreement applies to all manufacturing facilities, including those not directly owned by the company.

The conditions and requirements set out in your No Sweat policy should include:

1. Compliance with National Labour Laws and International Standards

Companies that win contracts with the school board must ensure that the workplaces where their products are made will comply with local labour laws and the minimum labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO), as outlined in the No Sweat policy.

2. Public Disclosure of Factory Locations

A No Sweat policy should require school clothing suppliers to report to the school board and the public the names and addresses of all workplaces where the school board's clothing is being made. Ideally, factory information should be available to the public through the school board's website. A less desirable option is for that information to be available upon request.

Some school uniform suppliers will argue against publicly disclosing factory locations, but will offer to tell the school board where their factories are located, as long as the school board promises to keep that information confidential. This is inadequate. When companies make this information publicly available, human rights groups can investigate conditions and report violations when they occur. Public disclosure of factory locations encourages companies to pay more attention to conditions in their factories. When factory locations are no longer hidden from the public, companies feel compelled to ensure there are no labour violations in the factories where their products are made.

Experience from university No Sweat campaigns illustrates that while suppliers often oppose public disclosure of factory locations when policies are being developed, they cooperate with those same policies once they are adopted. Some major university suppliers are now marketing themselves as more transparent companies because of their willingness to disclose factory locations producing university apparel. Some are even listing those factories on their company websites. (See Nike, JanSport and Gear for Sports websites.)

Your No Sweat policy should also include a provision requiring suppliers to provide the name and address of any new workplaces making school clothes as soon as the production begins in these facilities.

3. Factory Monitoring

School boards do not have the resources to carry out factory monitoring themselves, nor should they be expected to do so. It's the company's responsibility to prove that the worker rights outlined in the No Sweat policy are being respected.

School board clothing suppliers should be responsible for monitoring their supply factories, and preference in granting new contracts should be given to suppliers that use acceptable third-party verifiers and are willing to publicly disclose the findings of third-party audits as part of their annual reports.

4. Annual Public Reports

Suppliers should be required to provide annual, public reports on their progress in achieving compliance with the No Sweat policy. Reports should include:

- information on the supplier's monitoring and verification program;
- the name of the third-party auditing organization, if they are using one;
- the findings of monitoring and third-party audits; and
- a summary of corrective action taken.

A number of major US brands are currently providing this level of public reporting through the Fair Labor Association (FLA) website: www.fairlabor.org. While few if any of these companies are school board suppliers, these reports pro-

vide useful examples of transparent reporting.

The Worker Rights Consortium goes further, publicly disclosing full reports from factory investigations of university suppliers. Visit: www.workersrights.org.

5. Responding to Complaints

School boards should be prepared to receive complaints concerning violations of the No Sweat policy from local labour and human rights organizations or other interested third parties. Suppliers should be required to respond to all legitimate complaints with verified evidence that the violations have either not occurred or corrective action has been taken.

If a third-party factory audit is required to verify whether the complaint is justified and/or whether corrective action has been taken, the school board should have the right to approve the auditing organization. Those findings should also be available to the complainant and to the public.

In some cases, such as reports of violations of workers' legal rights in Canada, the school board and the company could ask that a government inspector from the Ministry of Labour carry out a factory audit. In other cases, the school board and the company could agree upon a third-party organization to investigate reported abuses. The company, not the school board, should pay for the investigation and the results should be made available to the school board, people making the complaint, and the public.

Some Canadian universities with No Sweat policies are beginning to discuss how they could work together to enforce these policies and investigate complaints. In the future, your school board might decide to work together with other school

boards, universities and municipal governments to respond to complaints of violations of No Sweat policies. This approach makes sense since many companies supply a number of school boards, and some companies supply school boards, universities and municipal governments.

6. Corrective Action

If your No Sweat policy is effective, you will no doubt discover violations of local labour laws and/or ILO standards. Few, if any, factories are totally free of violations. A No Sweat policy will give your school board the mandate to require suppliers to take corrective action when violations are identified and to provide verifiable evidence that the violations are being eliminated.

Manufacturers should be given sufficient time and opportunities to achieve compliance. The supplier should provide the school board with a corrective action plan, including reasonable deadlines.

Cutting off a supplier is the last resort when serious problems persist and the supplier is unwilling or unable to correct them.

An effective No Sweat policy encourages companies to improve working conditions in their current supply factories, rather than switching to other factories when sweatshop abuses are reported. The No Sweat policy gives your school board the authority to ask suppliers to fix the problems when violations of workers' rights are identified. The objective of a No Sweat policy is to improve working conditions and win respect of workers' rights, not to cut off suppliers.



Students check the labels.

[NO SWEAT TOOL KIT]

The pages that follow contain campaign tools for you to use in your No Sweat School campaign. Please feel free to photocopy or adapt these tools to meet your needs.

1. Key Elements of a No Sweat Policy
2. No Sweat Information Sheet
3. No Sweat Petition
4. Sample Letter to School Board Chair or Trustee
5. Model No Sweat School Board Purchasing Policy
6. Web Resources



[KEY ELEMENTS OF A] NO SWEAT POLICY

To ensure that the rights of workers sewing clothing for your school are respected, your school board's No Sweat policy should be based on internationally recognized labour standards and require your Board's suppliers to:

- disclose the names and addresses of factories producing school clothing;
- provide annual public reports on their progress in ensuring labour rights are respected in those factories;
- co-operate with independent "third-party" investigations when violations are reported; and
- take action to correct problems when violations have been confirmed.

Minimum Labour Standards:

Local Labour Laws: School clothing suppliers and their subcontractors must make sure that factories they own and use abide by labour laws in the country of manufacture.

International Standards: School suppliers and their subcontractors must also respect the internationally accepted labour standards outlined in the Declarations of United Nations and the Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Wages: The better policies also require payment of a living wage by local standards, and prohibit specific forms of discrimination against women workers.

Public Disclosure of Factory Locations

In order to be effective, a No Sweat policy should require school clothing suppliers to publicly report the names and addresses of all workplaces where the school board's clothing is being made. Students, teachers, parents and the general public should have a right to this information. Your school board could make the factory information available to the public by posting it on its website, or by mailing out the information as requested by individuals or organizations.

When a clothing company agrees to follow a No Sweat policy, but refuses to tell us which factories they are using, they are saying: "Just trust me. Would I use sweatshops?" That's not good enough. When companies make this information publicly available, human rights organizations can investigate conditions and report violations when they occur.

- No Forced Labour
- No Child Labour
- No Harassment or Abuse

- No Discrimination
- Maximum Hours of Work
- Living Wage

- Health and Safety Protections
- Freedom of Association and the Right to Bargain Collectively

Third-party: An independent organization or individual, not connected to the factory owner or the companies for which clothing is produced. For example, labour ministry inspectors, auditing companies or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as women's groups, human rights organizations, or church groups with professional training in factory monitoring or auditing.

Public Annual Reporting by Companies

Adopting a No Sweat policy doesn't mean your school board will have to monitor factories where school clothes are made. It's the company's responsibility to prove that the worker rights outlined in the No Sweat policy are being respected.

An effective No Sweat policy requires a company supplying school clothes to submit an annual public report to the school board on the steps it is taking to make sure the policy is being followed. Reports should include the results of factory monitoring and corrective action being taken to clean up abuses. More responsible companies are asking third-party organizations to verify that their factories are following the standards in the No Sweat policies. This process is sometimes called an "independent audit."

Co-operate with Third-Party Investigations

The No Sweat policy should require clothing suppliers to co-operate with third-party investigations when there are complaints of worker rights abuses.

In some cases, such as reports of violations of workers' legal rights in Canada, the school board and the company could ask that a government inspector from the Ministry of Labour carry out a factory au-

dit. In other cases, the school board and the company could agree upon a third-party organization to investigate reported abuses. The company, not the school board, should pay for the investigation and the results should be made available to the school board, people making the complaint, and the public.

Take Action When Violations Are Discovered

An effective No Sweat policy encourages companies to improve working conditions in their current supply factories, rather than switching to other factories when sweatshop abuses are reported (also known as "cutting and running"). The No Sweat policy gives your school board the authority to ask suppliers to fix the problems when violations of workers' rights are identified. When violations are identified, the supplier should provide the school board a corrective action plan with reasonable deadlines to clean up the abuses.

The decision to cut off a school board clothing supplier should only be made as a last resort. The objective of a No Sweat policy is to improve working conditions and win respect for workers' rights, not to cut off suppliers.

For more information on No Sweat policies, visit: www.maquilasolidarity.org

[NO SWEAT INFORMATION] SHEET

Name of your school:

TYPE OF CLOTHING:	COMPANY THAT MAKES IT:	CA REGISTRATION NUMBER ON THE LABEL:	COUNTRIES WHERE THE CLOTHING WAS MADE:	PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF ORDERING/ PURCHASING THE CLOTHING
T-shirt	Know Nothing Apparel	CA 54321	Egypt, Thailand, Canada	Athletics Dept., school administration

[SAMPLE NO SWEAT] PETITION

We want our school clothing to be sweat-free!

Many workers who sew clothing work under sweatshop conditions, which include excessive hours, poverty wages, forced overtime, unsafe and unhealthy conditions, child labour and denial of the right to organize and bargain collectively.

We want our school clothing to be made under humane conditions, not in sweatshops.

Therefore, we, the undersigned students, teachers and community members call on the _____ School Board to adopt a No Sweat policy which would require all school clothing suppliers to ensure that the rights of all workers making school clothing are respected, as defined in local labour laws and relevant Declarations of the United Nations (UN) and Conventions of the UN's International Labour Organization.

Name	Address/School	Signature
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____

Photocopy this petition and ask students, teachers and community members to sign it.

Please return the completed petitions to:

SAMPLE LETTER TO SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR OR TRUSTEE

[Address]

Dear [Name of Chairperson or Trustee],

On behalf of the students at [name of school], I want to be sure that the workers who make my school clothing are not paid poverty wages, forced to work unacceptably long hours, experience discrimination, physical and verbal abuse or sexual harassment, or are fired for organizing to improve conditions. In order to be certain that the people sewing the clothing for the schools in [name of school board] are not working under sweatshop conditions, I urge the Board to adopt a No Sweat purchasing policy.

A No Sweat policy would require clothing suppliers to provide evidence that the places where their clothing is made are following local labour laws and international labour standards. It also would require suppliers to publicly disclose all factory names and locations and accept independent monitoring of these facilities.

I am not asking that the school board boycott any specific companies. Instead, I would urge you to adopt a policy that would apply to all current and future companies that want to supply clothing to our schools. Companies interested in selling clothing to schools in this area would have to prove that they are respecting workers rights, and clean up violations when they are identified. Such a policy would encourage school clothing suppliers to better monitor their factories and would support workers' efforts to win dignity in their workplace.

At my school, there are a number of students, teachers and community members who want the [name of school board] to adopt a No Sweat policy. We would like to request an opportunity to speak with you further about the details of the No Sweat policy and how it could be effectively implemented. Please get back to us with possible dates when we could present our proposal to the appropriate Board committee.

We hope that you will agree that the people sewing clothing for the schools under the jurisdiction of [name of school board] deserve to be treated with respect, and we look forward to the opportunity to discuss this proposal with you and other school board trustees and staff.

Sincerely,

MODEL NO SWEAT SCHOOL BOARD PURCHASING POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The purposes of this policy are to ensure that apparel manufactured for the _____ School Board and the schools within its jurisdiction are made under humane working conditions in compliance with accepted international standards and local laws, and to promote greater respect for workers' rights and improved working conditions in the apparel industry worldwide.

This policy applies to all apparel purchases made by the _____ School Board and the schools within its jurisdiction, including, but not limited to, student uniforms, athletics and gym wear, school spirit, club and team wear and employee uniforms.

The _____ School Board shall undertake to consult extensively with teachers, staff, students, parents, other educational institutions and relevant labour, human rights and non-governmental organizations regarding the Policy and its implementation. The Policy shall be reviewed on a regular basis.

2. DEFINITIONS

"Board" means the School Board.

"Child" means any person less than 15, unless local minimum age law stipulates a higher age for work or mandatory schooling, or less than 14 if the minimum age law is set at that age in accordance with developing country exceptions under ILO Convention 138.

"Employer" means an entity that employs or contracts a worker in the production of a product.

"Homeworker" means any person who carries out work in his or her home or in other premises of his or her own choice, other than the workplace of the employer, for remuneration, which results in a product or service as specified by the employer, irrespective of who

provides the equipment, materials and or other inputs used.

"Minimum labour standards" means the minimum labour standards set out in the following section entitled "Labour Standards Provisions."

"Policy" means this document in its entirety.

"Product" means any article of clothing, head-wear or footwear, or any item made of fabric or by knitting, weaving or felting manufactured for the Board or any of its schools.

"Supplier" means an entity who sells a product to the Board or any of its schools. It also includes any licensee that enters into an agreement with the Board or any of its schools to use a trademark on a product, or any school uniform supplier that enters into an agreement with the Board or any of its schools to provide school uniforms to students.

"Subcontractor" means any person who directly or indirectly provides the supplier with goods and/or services integral to the manufacture of apparel products for the Board or any of its schools.

"Trademark" means a trademark, logo or other symbol associated with the Board or a school under its jurisdiction.

"Worker" means a person involved in the manufacture of a product.

Wages that meet "basic needs" by local standards are most effectively determined through free collective bargaining. In the absence of free collective bargaining, wages that meet "basic needs" should be defined as wages paid for a normal 48 hour work week that are sufficient by local standards to provide for the food, clothing, housing, health care, potable water, child care and transportation needs of the worker and his/her dependents. In defining wages that meet basic

needs, factors that should be taken into account include the average number of dependents and the average number of wage earners per family in the sector in each country, local “market basket” surveys of the cost of goods and services needed by an average family, as well as data from local governments, labour and human rights organizations, and UN agencies.

3. LABOUR STANDARDS PROVISIONS

Where this policy and the applicable laws of the country of manufacture differ, the standard that provides the greater right, benefit or protection to the worker shall apply.

Every supplier shall ensure that its manufacturing facilities, and those of its subcontractors, producing for the Board or a school under its jurisdiction comply with national and other laws applicable in each workplace and shall respect this Policy and the internationally recognized workers' rights and labour standards expressed in the conventions of the UN's International Labour Organization. Furthermore, all suppliers and their subcontractors shall ensure that:

Forced Labour

No employer shall subject a worker to forced labour practices, whether in the form of involuntary prison labour, indentured labour, bonded labour or otherwise. Workers shall not be required to lodge financial deposits or their original identity papers with their employer.

Child Labour

No employer shall use child labour. Adequate transitional economic assistance and appropriate educational opportunities shall be provided to any displaced child worker. Workers under the age of 18 shall not be exposed to situations in the workplace that are hazardous, unsafe or unhealthy.

Harassment and Abuse

No worker shall be subject to physical, sexual, psychological abuse or harassment, verbal abuse, or any other form of abuse, including corporal punishment.

Discrimination

No employer shall discriminate against a worker in hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination on the basis of age, race, caste, national

origin, religion, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation.

Women's Rights

No worker shall be subject to the forced use of contraceptives or pregnancy testing. Workers will be permitted to take maternity leave without facing the threat of dismissal, loss of seniority or deduction in wages, and shall be able to return to their former employment at the same rate of pay and benefits.

Hours of Work

No employer shall require a worker to work in excess of 48 hours per week, and shall provide each of its workers with one day off for every seven-day period. If a worker is requested to work overtime (more than 48 hours per week), such overtime shall not exceed 12 hours per week, only be requested in exceptional and short-term circumstances and be remunerated at a premium rate.

Freedom of Association and the Right to Bargain Collectively

Workers shall have the right to join or form trade unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively. Workers' representatives shall not be discriminated against and shall have access to carry out their representation functions in the workplace. Where the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is restricted under law, the employer shall facilitate and will not hinder the development of parallel means for independent and free association and bargaining.

Wages and Compensation

Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week meet, at a minimum, national legal standards or industry benchmark standards, whichever is higher.

In any event wages paid for a standard working week should always be enough to meet basic needs of workers and their families and to provide some discretionary income. All workers shall be provided with written and understandable information about their employment conditions with respect to their wages.

Deductions from wages as a disciplinary measure shall not be permitted.

Health and Safety

Every employer shall provide its workers with a safe and healthy workplace, including access to clean toi-

let facilities, potable water and, if appropriate, sanitary facilities for the storage of food. If accommodations are provided, such accommodations shall be clean, safe, and meet the basic needs of the workers. Adequate steps shall be taken to prevent accidents and injury to health by minimizing the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment. Workers shall receive regular and recorded health and safety training, and such training shall be repeated for new or reassigned workers.

Employment Relationship

To every extent possible work performed must be on the basis of a recognized employment relationship established through national law and practice. Obligations to employees under labour or social security laws and regulations arising from the regular employment relationship shall not be avoided through the use of labour-only contracting, subcontracting, or homeworking arrangements, or through apprenticeship schemes where there is no real intent to impart skills or provide regular employment, nor shall any such obligations be avoided through the excessive use of fixed-term contracts of employment.

Homeworkers

The employer shall take special steps to ensure that homeworkers are afforded a similar level of protection as would be afforded to directly employed personnel under the requirements of this Policy. Such special steps shall include but not be limited to:

(a) establishing legally binding, written purchasing contracts requiring compliance with minimum criteria (in accordance with the requirements of the Policy);

(b) ensuring that the requirements of the written purchasing contract are understood and implemented by homeworkers and all other parties involved in the purchasing contract; and

(c) maintaining, on the employer's premises, comprehensive records detailing the identities of homeworkers; the quantities of goods produced and/or hours worked by each homeworker.

Employers shall keep adequate records of their employees' names, addresses, rate of pay and number of hours worked each week in order to make this information available for an independent audit.

Awareness of Policy

Workers whose work is covered by the Policy shall be made aware of the Policy orally and through the posting of standards in a prominent place in the local language(s) spoken by employees and managers.

4. COMPLIANCE

1. Before the Board or any of its schools enters into an agreement with a supplier, the supplier must confirm that:

(a) it will comply with ethical labour practices that meet or exceed the minimum labour standards in the Policy; and

(b) it acquires goods and services from other entities who agree to comply with labour practices that meet or exceed the minimum labour standards.

2. In addition to the confirmation mentioned above, a supplier shall provide the Board the names and addresses of each subcontractor and manufacturing facility to be used in the manufacture of the product. This information shall be considered public information.

3. Every supplier is responsible for monitoring their supply factories. Preference will be given to suppliers who use the services of third-party verifiers acceptable to the Board.

4. Every supplier shall be required to submit an annual compliance report to the Board containing information on the monitoring and verification program, the name(s) of the third-party verifier(s), the findings of the monitoring and external audit(s), and corrective action taken to achieve compliance with the Policy. This report shall be considered public information.

5. VIOLATIONS AND REMEDIAL ACTION

1. If the Board receives a credible report that a supplier or an entity with whom the supplier entered into an agreement to manufacture a product has violated the minimum labour standards of the Policy, the Board shall send a notice of the violation(s) to the supplier.

2. A notice of violation shall:

(a) describe the alleged violation, including which minimum labour standard(s) in the Policy has/have allegedly been violated;

(b) specify the entity which the Board believes may have violated the minimum labour standard(s) in the Policy; and

(c) set out the supplier's requirement to respond to a notice of violation within 30 days (in accordance with subsection 5.3).

3. Within 30 days from the date of the notice of violation, the supplier shall provide the Board with:

(a) supporting information to demonstrate that the violation described in the notice did not occur; or

(b) a detailed remedial program to demonstrate how the violation described in the notice shall be rectified within one year of the date of the notice.

4. If the supplier responds to the notice of violation with documentation that the violation did not occur, the Board may require the supplier to co-operate with a third-party audit or a Ministry of Labour audit.

5. If a third-party or Ministry of Labour audit determines that the violation of the minimum labour standard(s) set out in the notice of violation did occur the supplier shall submit a detailed program to demonstrate how the violation(s) described in the notice shall be rectified within one year of the date of the notice.

6. If a remedial program has been submitted in response to a notice of violation, the Board may require the supplier to co-operate with a third-party audit to verify that the violation(s) has/have been rectified in accordance with the remedial program.

6. TERMINATION

1. The Board has the authority to terminate any contract with a supplier without notice or penalty if:

(a) A supplier who has been sent a notice of violation has failed to make an adequate response within 30 days;

(b) The supplier refuses to submit or fails to cooperate with a third-party audit as required by the Board; or

(c) A third-party audit of a factory where violations have been reportedly corrected (as per section 5.6) determines that the violation was not rectified in accordance with the agreed-upon remedial program.

2. If the Board terminates an agreement under this section with a supplier, it ceases to be liable to the supplier or to any other person for any unpaid amounts that would otherwise have been payable under the agreement and shall not be under any obligation to return to the supplier any product supplied by the supplier under the agreement.

3. The Board, at its discretion, may terminate a contract or prohibit a vendor from holding contracts with the Board for filing false information or for failing to file information required under this policy.

WEB RESOURCES

TO ASSIST YOUR CAMPAIGN

No Sweat Campaign website

Maquila Solidarity Network (Canada): www.maquilasolidarity.org

Other websites on ethical purchasing campaigns

Bangor Clean Clothes Campaign: www.pica.ws/cc/index.html

Clean Clothes Campaign: www.cleanclothes.org/campaign/communities.htm

Clean Clothes Connection: www.cleanclothesconnection.org

New York State Labor-Religion Coalition: www.labor-religion.org

SweatFree Communities: www.behindthelabel.org/campaigns/sfc/

UNITE: www.uniteunion.org/sweatshops/cities/

Other websites on anti-sweatshop campaigning

Behind the Label: www.behindthelabel.org

Campaign for Labor Rights: www.clrlabor.org

Canadian Labour Congress: www.clc-ctc.ca

Common Threads (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation):

www.commonthreads.ca

Global Exchange: www.globalexchange.org

National Labor Committee: www.nlcnet.org

Oxfam Canada: www.oxfam.ca

Sweatshop Watch: www.sweatshopwatch.org

US Labor Education in the Americas Project (US/LEAP): www.usleap.org

Other websites on codes of conduct and monitoring

Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI): www.ethicaltrade.org

Fair Labor Association (FLA): www.fairlabor.org

Fair Wear Foundation (FWF): www.fairwear.nl

Social Accountability International (SAI): www.sa-intl.org

Workers Rights Consortium (WRC): www.workersrights.org



Maquila Solidarity Network

606 Shaw Street

Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6G 3L6

416-532-8584 (phone)

416-532-7688 (fax)

info@maquilasolidarity.org

www.maquilasolidarity.org