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## El Salvador cracks down on discipline in schools – 25th August 2025

### Level 4

El Salvador is cracking down on school discipline. The new education minister is a former soldier. She has started inspecting schools in army uniform. She is also a doctor. She asked all school principals to be role models. They must greet students every morning. They will also check pupils' haircuts and uniforms. She warned: "Failure to comply with these provisions...will be considered a serious breach of...responsibility."

The focus of the new initiative is on appearance and conduct. Boys must have military-style haircuts. All students must wear neat uniforms and greet all teachers. There has been a mixed reaction. A teachers' union called it a "regrettable militarization" of schools. It worried the country could become a military dictatorship. It worried abuses of power against students might increase. However, many parents support the new rules.

### Level 5

El Salvador is cracking down on school discipline. The president appointed a former army captain as education minister. She has started inspecting schools in army dress. She is also a physician and was head of the country's coronavirus pandemic vaccination rollout. She has required all school principals to become role models. They must greet students as they come to school each morning. They will also check pupils' haircuts and uniforms. She warned: "Failure to comply with these provisions...will be considered a serious breach of administrative responsibility."

The main focus of the new education initiative is on appearance and conduct. Boys must have closely-cropped, military-style haircuts, while all students must wear neat uniforms and greet all teachers. There has been a mixed reaction to the policy. A teachers' union called it a "regrettable militarization" of schools. It worried the country was going back to the days of military dictatorship. It is concerned abuses of power against students might increase. However, many parents support the new rules. One said: "That's how you straighten children out from a young age."

### Level 6

El Salvador is cracking down on school discipline. President Nayib Bukele has appointed a former army captain, Karla Trigueros, as education minister. She has started inspecting schools wearing army fatigues. Ms Trigueros is also a physician and was head of the country's vaccination logistics during the coronavirus pandemic. One of her first edicts was to require all school principals to become role models. School heads will be required to greet students as they come through the school gates each morning. They will also scrutinize pupils' haircuts and uniforms. Trigueros warned schools that: "Failure to comply with these provisions...will be considered a serious breach of administrative responsibility."

The main focus of El Salvador's new education initiative is on appearance and conduct. In particular, boys are required to have closely-cropped, military-style haircuts, while all students must wear tidy uniforms and greet all teachers respectfully. There has been mixed reaction to the new policy. A leading teachers' union called it a "regrettable militarization" of schools. It was concerned that the country was veering back to the days of military dictatorship. It said: "We are concerned that the already [endemic] abuses of power against students will increase." However, many parents are supportive of the new rules. One said: "That's how you straighten children out from a young age."