

## **School Uniform Question**

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Individualism is a fundamental part of society in many countries. Most people believe in the right to express their own opinion without fear of punishment. This value, however, is coming under fire in an unlikely place—the public school classroom. The issue is school uniforms. Should public school students be allowed to make individual decisions about clothing, or should all students be required to wear a uniform? School uniforms are the better choice because they simplify life, they affect behavior positively, and they cost the same for all students.

First, wearing school uniforms would help make students' lives simpler. They would no longer have to decide what to wear every morning. Often, students waste time trying on outfit after outfit in an effort to choose one. If school required uniforms, students would have 2-3 sets of the same shirts, pants or skirts, socks and shoes, ready to go in their bedroom closets. As Jason Bourne (2020) confirms, uniforms cut down on morning stress because there is no battle with children about what they want to wear to school (p. 1). Uniforms would not only save time but also would eliminate the stress often associated with this chore.

Another reason why school uniforms should be mandatory is that they influence students to act responsibly in groups and as individuals. When students wear a school uniform, both on and off campus, they are made aware that they are representing their school. They therefore are more likely to act according to their school's policies and values. Statistics also show the positive effects that school uniforms have on violence and truancy ("Uniforms", 2010). According to a recent survey in a large school district in Florida, incidents of school violence dropped by 50 percent, attendance and test scores improved, and student suspensions declined approximately 30 percent after school uniforms were introduced (Bourne, 2020, p. 1). In

addition, uniforms create a feeling of unity among students. For example, when students do something as a group, such as attend meetings in the auditorium or eat lunch in the cafeteria, the fact that they are all wearing the same uniform gives them a sense of community. Likewise, uniforms give students a sense of pride when they participate in activities with students from other schools. Uniforms make students feel that they are ambassadors to their school.

Finally, and most importantly, school uniforms would help make all the students feel equal. Students' standards of living differ greatly from family to family. Some families are well-off while others are not. Studies show that children whose families can't afford the kinds of clothes that others are wearing experience less stress when everyone is expected to wear a uniform (Bourne, 2020, p. 2). Indeed, implementing mandatory school uniforms would level the financial status playing field, eliminating all the pressure associated with wearing the latest trendy clothes, accessories, and shoes. Moreover, it would raise the self-esteem of students who cannot afford to wear expensive clothing. We must not forget that school is a place to get an education, not to promote a fashion show.

Opponents of mandatory uniforms say uniforms should not be worn in school. They feel that students who wear school uniforms cannot express their individuality ("Counterpoint", 2019). They claim that students feel frustrated by the lack of originality of their clothing and get bored. They lose their enthusiasm to look nice for their classmates, and their hygiene suffers. These points have some merit on the surface. However, as stated previously, school is a place to learn, not to flaunt wealth and fashion. Society must decide if individual expression through clothing is more valuable than improved educational performance. It is important to remember that school uniforms would be worn only during school hours. Students can express their individuality in the way that they dress

outside of the classroom.

In summary, implementing mandatory school uniforms for students would improve home life and student behavior while allowing students to feel equal regardless of their family's financial status. Mornings run more smoothly when kids know what to wear. Studies show that students learn better and act more responsibly when they wear uniforms. Most importantly students wouldn't make others jealous by the clothes they are wearing. Although some may say that wearing a uniform stifles a person's individuality, school is first and foremost a place of learning, and what you wear shouldn't be important. Public schools should require uniforms in order to benefit both the students and society as a whole.

### References

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