

The drawbacks of making students have to wear a costume in order to have a right to a free public education in America

“Uniforms are about power and control—conformity and obedience. Why would a student want to go into teaching knowing they’ll have to enforce such a misdirected and authoritarian policy? When schools and staff have real relationships with students and families, uniforms will be pointless.”

-- John Harris Loflin

Self-Perceptions and Public School Uniforms:

Abstract: This study attempts to clarify the relationships between public school uniforms and some of their intended results: student self-worth, student and staff perceptions of gang presence, and school climate. The instruments used in the study included a questionnaire on gang presence and identity, the National Association of School Principals Comprehensive Assessment of School Environments, and the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children. Participants consisted of 415 urban public middle school students and 83 teachers. Findings indicate that, although perceptions did not vary for students across uniform policy, teachers from schools with uniform policies perceived lower levels of gang presence. Although the effect size was small, students from schools without uniforms reported higher self-perception scores than students from schools with uniform policies. Student and teacher perceptions of school climate did not vary across uniform policy.

*K. Wade & M. Stafford, *Education and Urban Society*, 2003.

<http://eus.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/35/4/399>

School Uniforms

A 20th century response to 21st century challenges: Why uniforms won't improve schools and student voice will**

School uniforms reflect the dominator, not the partnership model

All societies are patterned on either a dominator model—in which human hierarchies are ultimately backed by force or threat of force—or a partnership model, with variations in between. A partnership with youth, not a one-way coercive top-down mandatory school uniform policy, reflects this enlightened global perspective.

Mandatory uniforms: A 20th century solution to 21st century challenges

The future belongs to the children. Our schools and curriculum must be based on the principles and spirit of sustainable development. Since it is their future we are preparing for, students must be a part of the processes involved in creating sustainable schools for a world each will inherit. Although mandatory school uniforms appear to make sense, the necessity of fear, coercion, and control required to implement such a policy and the divisiveness it creates in the school community, send the wrong message to children and the world.

“Adults, why do you fear children’s participation?”

--12 year-old rag picker, youth member, Concern for Working Children, a democratic children’s organization, New Delhi, India <https://www.concernedforworkingchildren.org/>

The middle way: Democratic education

Many nations are moving to a new global, green, smart, cooperative, open, and democratic world. To go forward, public schools must recognize how increasingly interdependent the world has

become. This is a significant shift: 1) from competition to cooperation; 2) from domination to democracy; 3) from growth to sustainability; and, 4) from assimilation to self-actualization.

A controlling mandatory public school uniform policy and the manipulation, compliance, and paternalism it reflects are not within the higher-order potential of our human nature and an ethos of these global shifts.

Thus, any public district/school requiring students wear a costume in order to get a free public education must reconsider their policy and join the world initiative to set forth a sustainable global society not found on the dominator model, but on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace.

Can school uniforms be universalized?

MLK said there are good laws and bad laws. Those that are bad can't be universalized--those that benefit one group over the other. Since uniforms benefit adults over students, school uniform policy cannot be universalized. See more on pp. 40-42.**

** <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/School-Uniforms-A-20th-century-response-to-21st-century-challenges-Why-mandatory-school-uniforms-wont-improve-IPS-and-student-voice-will.pdf>