



Classroom 2006 Charter School Uniform Survey

June 14, 2006

Summary

Classroom School Uniforms sent emails to 1811 attendees of the 2006 National Charter Schools Conference hosted by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools and the California Charter Schools Association, prior to the conference in Sacramento on February 28-March 3, 2006, and 712 “reminder” emails after the conference, inviting them to take part in our charter school uniform survey. Overall, 131 responses were received (7.2%).

When comparing responses (prior and post conference) it is certain that charter schools look to school uniforms and dress code programs as a method of promoting their school’s image of focused education.

Almost half of the respondents have been charter school administrators for more than a year, and show an understanding of the community as well as the issues facing their schools. A majority of responders represented charter schools in the West, Midwest and California.

Reading at grade level, math comprehension, parental involvement, inappropriate clothing, discipline, attendance and bullying were among the most cited issues charter schools currently face. For schools not using uniforms, AYP Target Achievement also rated high. 97% of schools evaluate the effectiveness of the program based on observations of the principal and key staff. 85% involve parents and 71% involve the students. The use of data such as discipline logs (63%), attendance records (59%), AYP scores (49%), and test scores (51%) are also used.

75% of respondents cited that they have school uniforms or a dress code policy in at least one school if not the entire district and 9% are in discussions. 58% of those in uniforms stated that their policy was district wide. 25% of uniform programs are in the elementary school, 31% in middle school, and 25% in high schools. Of those schools in uniform, 97% of charter schools have mandatory school uniform policies. 99% of those in uniforms felt their school uniform programs were successful.

45% of the schools surveyed have been in school uniforms or dress codes between one to five years. 39% have used uniforms or dress codes between five and ten years, while 4% have been using programs for more than ten years. This information reinforces the

longevity and effectiveness of such programs and is inline with the findings found in Classroom's 2006 National School Board Association School Uniform Survey.

Of those respondents not in uniforms, 93% reported that it does matter what students wear to school. 20% felt there was too much pressure put on school uniforms. In addition 78% felt school uniforms were a cost saver over general apparel.

Reduction of peer pressure and disciplinary issues, and enhancement of school image and the positive effect in the classroom are cited as the main benefits of implementing a school uniform program.

30% of respondents stated that uniforms have helped improve attendance. Of those who saw improvement, 13% stated the improvement was between 1-10%, 10% stated an improvement between 10-15% and 8 % of those surveyed stated attendance improved between 25-50%.

91% of those surveyed cited that uniforms have created a positive effect in their classroom with 97% stating that school uniforms help improve their school's self image.

More than half of those surveyed have seen a decline in discipline referrals in their school. 13% stated a change between 1-10%, 15% reported a change between 10-25% and 13% reported a decline between 25-50%. 69% of those surveyed stated a decline in gang activity or affiliation in their schools while 33% felt this question was not applicable to their school district.

24% of responding charter schools surveyed stated their AYP scores improved between 1 and 50 points since implementing a dress code or school uniform policy. More than 50% of these charter schools are seeing improved parental participation since implementing a school uniform or dress code program.

Compared to traditional public schools, public charter schools are seeing improved participation by parents. 89% of those surveyed felt their teachers supported their school uniform program. Only 1% of those surveyed felt their teachers do not support such a program in their school or district.

Conference attendees responding overwhelmingly agreed that school uniforms save parents money compared to general apparel merchandise. Price, comfort, availability of sizes and availability in their community rank highest when considering a school uniform partner. When asked if a uniform manufacturer is important to a program's success, 47% of those surveyed felt a school uniform manufacturer or retailer was important.

Donations, general fund support, uniform closets and fundraisers are the main ways schools help those who cannot afford school uniforms. 89% reported that their school or district does not utilize Title One funds to assist eligible kids with uniforms.

When asked why their school would not consider uniforms, 39% of those surveyed responded that their district is too small or their school does not have problems uniforms would resolve. However, if parents were interested in school uniforms, 68% stated their district would consider such a policy.

When considering a school uniform program, 63% of those surveyed said that they use the Internet for information and 47% would reach out to other schools. 43% stated they would contact a school uniform manufacturer or retailer for information. 23% would reach out to a charter school trade association for more information. Most charter schools spend about a month educating their community about their school uniform program. However, many respondents stated that the process of educating the community is ongoing.


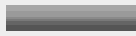

Key Findings

- Almost half of the respondents in the survey have been involved in charter schools for one to five years. 21% of those participating in the survey have been associated with charter schools for more than five years.
- A majority of responders represented charter schools in the West, Midwest and California.
- 75% of the conference attendees responding cited that they have uniforms in at least one school if not the entire district and 9% are in discussions.
- 58% of those in uniforms stated that their policy was district wide. 25% of uniform programs are in the elementary school, 31% in middle school, and 25% in high schools.
- 45% of the schools surveyed have been in school uniforms or dress codes for the period of one to five years. 39% have used a uniform or dress code between five and ten years and 4% have used programs for more than ten years. This information reinforces the longevity and effectiveness of such programs and is inline with the Classroom National School Board Association school uniform survey of public schools.
- 97% of responding charter schools in uniform have mandatory uniform policies.
- Most charter schools take about six months to study the implementation of a school uniform policy. 86% of those surveyed cited it took about six months. Most charter schools spend a month educating the community about their school uniform program. However, many respondents stated that the process of educating the community is ongoing.
- Reduction of peer pressure and disciplinary issues, as well as the enhancement of school image and positive effect in the classroom is cited as the main benefits of implementing a school uniform program.
- 99% of those in uniforms felt their school uniform programs were successful.
- 30% of respondents stated that uniforms have helped improve attendance in their schools. Of those who saw improvement, 13% stated the improvement was between 1-10%, 10% stated an improvement between 10-15% and 8 % of those surveyed stated attendance improved between 25-50%.






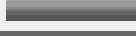

- 91% of those surveyed said that uniforms have created a positive effect in their classroom. 97% of charter school administrators surveyed stated that school uniforms has helped improve their school's self image. More than half of those surveyed have seen a decline in discipline referrals in their school. 13% stated a change between 1-10%, 15% reported a change between 10-25% and 13% reported a decline between 25-50%.
- 69% of those surveyed stated a decline in gang activity or affiliation in their schools. 33% felt this question was not applicable to their school district.
- 24% of responding charter schools stated their AYP scores improved between 1 and 50 points since implementing a dress code or school uniform policy.
- More than 50% of responding charter schools are seeing improved parent participation since implementing a school uniform or dress code program. Compared to other traditional public schools, public charter schools are seeing improved participation by its parents. 89% of those surveyed felt their teachers supported their school uniform program. Only 1% of those surveyed felt their teachers do not support such a program in their school or district.
- When asked what problems their school or district is currently experiencing, reading at grade level, math comprehension, parent involvement, inappropriate clothing, discipline, attendance and bullying were among the most cited issues. For school's not using uniforms, AYP Target Achievement also rated high. 97% of schools evaluate the effectiveness of the program based on observations of the principal and key staff. 85% involve the parents and 71% involve the students. The use of data such as discipline logs (63%), attendance records (59%), AYP scores (49%), and test scores (51%) are also used.
- Price, comfort, availability of sizes and availability in their community rank highest when considering a school uniform partner. When asked if a uniform manufacturer is important to a program's success, 47% of those surveyed felt a school uniform manufacturer or retailer was important.
- Conference attendees overwhelmingly agree that school uniforms save parents money compared to general apparel merchandise.
- Donations, general fund support, uniform closets and fundraisers are the main ways schools help those who cannot afford school uniforms.
- 89% reported that their school or district does not utilize Title One funds to assist eligible kids with uniforms.
- 93% of those schools not using uniforms reported that it does matter what students wear to school.
- 89% of those surveyed felt their teachers supported their school uniform program. Only 1% of those surveyed felt their teachers did not support such a program in their school or district.
- When asked why their school would not consider uniforms, 39% of those surveyed responded that their district is too small or their school does not have problems uniforms would resolve. However, if parents were interested in school uniforms 68% stated their district would consider such a policy.
- When considering a school uniform program, 63% of those surveyed stated that they use the Internet for information and 47% would reach out to other schools. 43%

- stated they would contact a school uniform manufacturer or retailer for information. 23% would reach out to a charter school trade association for more information
- Of those respondents not using school uniforms, 20% of those surveyed felt there was too much pressure put on school uniforms. In addition, 78% felt school uniforms were a cost saver over general apparel.


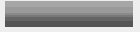


Almost half of the 2006 National Charter Schools Conference attendees responding to the survey have been associated with charter schools for one to five years. 21% of those participating in the survey have been associated with charter schools even longer, citing more than five years. This reinforces the conference attendee's understanding of the area, community and specific educational needs.

How long have you been a member of Charter School Association? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Less than 1 year		28.4%	37
1-5 years		48.1%	65
More than 5 years		21.2%	28
Total Respondents			130



A majority of responders represented charter schools from the West, California and Midwest participated the most in this survey.

Where is your school located? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Northeast		11.4%	15
South East		11.4%	15
West		27.4%	36
Mid West		12.2%	16
North West		3.2%	4
South West		10.6%	14
California		23.6%	31
Total Respondents			131





75% of the conference respondents cited that they have uniforms in at least one school if not the entire district and 9% are in discussions.

Does your school have a uniform or dress code policy? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes, the school or charter district is in uniform		62.3%	81
Yes, some schools in the charter district are in uniform		13.1%	17
No, we are in discussions		9.2%	12
No, we are not interested		15.3%	20
Total Respondents			130




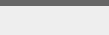
Of conference attendees responding there is almost an even split among attendees regarding how their uniform policy is designed.

Is your uniform policy campus choice or in all schools in the charter district? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Campus choice		48%	37
Throughout the charter district		52%	40
Total Respondents			77

58% of those in school uniforms stated that their policy was district wide. 25% have programs in the elementary school, 31% in middle school, and 25% in high schools.

If throughout the charter district, which schools use school uniforms? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
The entire district		58.1%	32
Pre -K		0%	0
Elementary schools		25.4%	8
Middle schools		30.9%	17
High schools		25.4%	14
Total Respondents			55

45% of the schools surveyed have been in school uniforms or dress codes for the period of one to five years. 39% have been using a uniforms or dress codes between five and ten years and 4% have been using programs for more than ten years. This information reinforces the longevity and effectiveness of such programs and is inline with the findings found in Classroom's 2006 National School Board Association school uniform survey.

How long has your school or charter district been using a dress code program? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Less than 1 year		11.6%	9
1-5 years		45.4%	35
5-10 years		38.9%	30
More than 10 years		3.8%	3
Total Respondents			77

Most charter schools take about six months to study and implement a school uniform policy in their schools. 86% of those surveyed cited it took about six months.




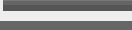

How long did it take your school to look at and implement a school uniform policy? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
6 months		86.4%	64
1-2 years		13.5%	10
Over 3 years		0%	0
Total Respondents			74

97% of Charter Schools in uniform have mandatory uniform policies.


Is your school uniform policy? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Voluntary		2.6%	2
Mandatory		97.3%	73
Total Respondents			75

Reduction of peer pressure and disciplinary issues, and enhancement of school image and the positive effect in the classroom are cited as the main benefits of implementing a school uniform program.




What are the benefits you look for using school uniforms? Check all that apply. (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Enhance our school's image		92%	69
Positive effect in the classroom		80%	60
Reduce Peer Pressure		92%	69
Boost Morale		49.3%	37

Stay focused		78.6%	59
Prevent gang affiliation		61.3%	46
Improve attendance		22.6%	17
Improve AYP scores		18.6%	13
Reduce disciplinary issues		84%	63
Total Respondents			75

Almost all charter school respondents' surveyed (99%) felt their school uniform programs were successful.



Do you consider your school uniform program successful? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		98.6%	74
No		1.3%	1
Total Respondents			75

30% of respondents stated that uniforms have helped improve attendance in their schools. Of those who saw improvement, 13% stated the improvement was between 1-10%, 10% stated an improvement between 10-15% and 8% of those surveyed stated attendance improved between 25-50%.


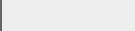
Have uniforms helped improve attendance? If so, by a about how much? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
No Change		69.3%	43
1-10%		12.9%	8
10%-25%		9.6%	6
25%-50%		1.6%	1

50% + 	6.4%	4
Total Respondents		62



91% of those surveyed cited that uniforms have created a positive effect in their classroom.




Have uniforms helped create a positive effect in the classroom? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		91.4%	64
No		8.6%	6
Total Respondents			70

97% of charter school respondents stated that school uniforms have helped improve their school's self image.




Do you feel uniforms have helped improve your school's self image? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		97.1%	69
No		2.8%	2
Total Respondents			71

More than half of those surveyed have seen a decline in discipline referrals in their school. 13% stated a change between 1-10%, 15% reported a change between 10-25% and 13% reported a decline between 25-50%






Have you seen a decline in discipline referrals in your school using uniforms? If so, by about how much? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
No Change		48.3%	29
1-10%		13.3%	8

10%-25%		15%	9
25%-50%		13.3%	8
50%+		10%	6
Total Respondents			60

69% of those surveyed stated a decline in gang activity or affiliation in their schools. 33% felt this question was not applicable to their school district.

Have you seen a decline in gang activity or affiliation by using uniforms? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		69.3%	43
No		17.7%	9
N/A		33.3%	8
Total Respondents			62

24% of charter schools surveyed stated their AYP scores improved between 1 and 50 points since implementing a dress code or school uniform policy.

Have your AYP scores improved since implementing a dress code or uniform policy? If so, by how many points? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
No Change		76.3%	45
1-10		8.5%	5
11-25		6.8%	4
26-50		0%	0
50+		8.5%	5
Total Respondents			59

More than 50% of charter school respondents are seeing improved parent participation since implementing a school uniform or dress code program. Compared to traditional public schools, public charter schools are seeing improved participation by its parents.

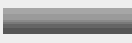





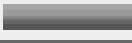



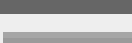
Is your school seeing improved parent participation since implementing your school uniform or dress code program? (combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		53.3%	32
No		46.6%	28
Total Respondents			60






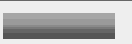

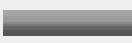

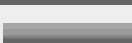
89% of those surveyed felt their teachers supported their school uniform program. Only 1% of those surveyed felt their teachers do not support such a program in their school or district.



How do teachers feel about the school uniform program? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Support strongly		58.6%	44
Support		30.6%	23
Neutral		9.35%	7
Do not support		1.3%	1
Total Respondents			75

When asked what problems their school or district is currently experiencing, reading at grade level, math comprehension, parent involvement, inappropriate clothing, discipline, attendance and bullying were among the most cited issues. For school's not using uniforms, AYP Target Achievement also rated high.









Does your school or charter district have problems in any of these areas? Check all that apply. (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Attendance		39.3%	24

AYP Target Achievement		29.5%	18
Bullying		31.1%	19
Discipline		34.4%	21
Economic Class Division		18%	11
Fighting		14.7%	9
Gang Activity		14.7%	9
Grade Retention		19.6%	12
Inappropriate Clothing		32.7%	20
Math Comprehension		44.2%	27
Parent Involvement		42.6%	26
Reading at Grade Level		59%	36
Total Respondents			61

Does your School or District have problems in any of these areas? (Check all that apply) (Not in Uniform Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Attendance		31.8%	7
AYP Target Achievement		40.9%	9
Bullying		9%	2
Discipline		27.2%	6
Economic Class Division		18.2%	4
Fighting		13.6%	3
Gang Activity		13.6%	3
Grade Retention		31.8%	7
Inappropriate Clothing		36.3%	8
Math Comprehension		59%	13

Parent Involvement		50%	11
Reading at Grade Level		59%	13
Total Respondents			22

97% of schools evaluate the effectiveness of the program based on observations of the principal and key staff. 85% involve the parents and 71% involve the students. The use of data such as discipline logs (63%), attendance records (59%), AYP scores (49%), and test scores (51%) are also used.

What measures does your school or charter district have in place to evaluate if the program is working? Check all that apply. (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Principal and staff observations		97.3%	74
Parent comments		85.5%	65
Teacher or school staff comments		89.4%	68
Student comments		71%	54
Discipline logs		63.1%	48
Attendance records		59.2%	15
AYP scores		48.6%	37
Test scores		51.3%	39
Total Respondents			76

Price, comfort, availability of sizes and availability in their community rank highest when considering a school uniform partner. The happier parents are with the ease of finding uniforms, the easier the program will be to implement. When asked if a uniform manufacturer is important to a program's success, 47% of those surveyed felt a school uniform manufacturer or retailer was important.

Is a school uniform manufacturer or retailer important to your program's success? (Combined)

		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		47.2%	35
No		52.7%	39
Total Respondents			74






Most charter schools spend about a month educating their community about their school uniform program. However, many respondents commented that the process of educating the community is ongoing.

How long did your school or charter district take to educate the community on your program? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Less than 1 month		38%	17
1-3 months		16.9%	12
3-6 months		14%	10
6-12 months		7%	5
1 year		4.2%	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)		21.1%	13
Total Respondents			71



Charter school attendees overwhelmingly agree that school uniforms save parents money compared to general apparel merchandise.

Do the parents in your school find school uniforms a cost saver over general apparel? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		86.6%	65
No		9.7%	7
Total Respondents			72



Donations, general fund support, uniform closets and fundraisers are the main ways schools help those who cannot afford school uniforms.

What does your school do to provide for families who cannot afford school uniforms? Check all that apply. (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Fundraisers		20%	15
Uniform closets		52%	39
Donations		66.6%	50
Assistance League's Operation School Bell		4%	3
General fund support		40%	30
Total Respondents			75







89% reported that their school or district does not utilize Title One funds to assist eligible kids with uniforms.



Does your school or charter district utilize Title One funds to assist eligible kids with uniforms? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		10.9%	8
No		89%	65
Total Respondents			73

93% of those schools using uniforms reported that it does matter what students wear to school.








Does it really matter what students wear to school? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		93.5%	29
No		6.4%	2
Total Respondents			31

When asked why their school would not consider uniforms 39% of those surveyed responded that their district is too small or their school does not have problems uniforms would resolve. However, if parents were interested in school uniforms 68% stated their district would consider such a policy.

Why is your school not considering school uniforms? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Tried, no success		0%	0
Small school or district		39.1%	9
Students would object		21.7%	5
Parents would object		30.4%	7
Cost		26%	6
No problems uniforms would cure		39.1%	9
Total Respondents			23



If parents were interested in school uniforms, would your district consider a policy? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		67.8%	19
No		32.1%	9
Total Respondents			28



Charter school administrators overwhelmingly stated the need for other schools and organizations to share information. If considering a school uniform program, 63% of those surveyed stated that they use the Internet for information and 47% would reach out to other schools. 43% stated they would contact a school uniform manufacturer or retailer for information. 23% would reach out to a charter school trade association for more information. This survey reinforces the need for organizations to discuss school uniform programs.

Where or how would you investigate implementing a new program? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
The Library		6.7%	2
The Internet		63.3%	19
Calling a school uniform manufacturer		43.3%	13
Contacting a school or district in uniform		46.6%	14
Visiting a uniform store		43.3%	4
Visiting your favorite local retailer		3.3%	1
Contacting the Charter School Association		23.3%	7

Total Respondents	30
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Of those respondents not using school uniforms, 20% of those surveyed felt there was too much pressure put on school uniforms. In addition 78% felt school uniforms were a cost saver over general apparel.

Do you believe too much pressure is put on school uniform policies (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		20%	6
No		80%	24
Total Respondents			30

Do you believe school uniforms are a cost saver over general apparel? (Combined)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		78.5%	22
No		21.4%	6
Total Respondents			28

For More Information:

As a national school uniform manufacturer, Classroom works with schools across the nation on their school uniform programs. If you would like additional information about this survey or Classroom School Uniforms, please feel free to contact Andy Beattie (818) 671-2143 or at abeattie@strategicpartners.net.