



Classroom 2006 NSBA School Uniform Survey

May 28, 2006

Summary

Classroom School Uniforms sent email to 5,692 National School Board Association members asking them to take our school uniform survey. Overall, 290 members participated.

Compared to the Classroom 2005 NSBA School Uniform Survey, more schools are reporting using uniforms than last year (34%) and for the first time that Classroom can recall, we are able to provide schools across the country with quantitative data based on these member experiences.

85% of respondents have been school board members for more than a year, showing an understanding of the community and the issues facing their districts. These members represented school districts in the Midwest and Northeast and a majority consider their district's location to be in suburban areas. 92% of the NSBA membership stated what a student wears to school matters. Parent involvement, reading at grade level, inappropriate clothing and bullying are some of the problems NSBA members are currently experiencing in their districts.

Over 34% of the respondents stated that they have a uniform or dress code policy and 36% stated they are in discussions. Last year, over 23% of the respondents stated that they have a uniform or dress code policy. 63% of the respondents stated that the uniform policy is district wide compared to 37% who stated that the policy was campus choice. Of those responding districts with dress code or uniform policies, there continue to be more with mandatory uniform policies than with voluntary ones, and more districts are implementing school uniform programs that are district wide. 80% of those surveyed felt their program was successful.

NSBA members also stated that uniforms have helped improve attendance in their schools (36%), create a positive effect in the classroom (88%) and have helped improve their school's self image (86%). 64% with a school uniform program experienced a decline in discipline referrals and 41% experienced a decline in gang activity or affiliation. 32% reported an improvement in their AYP scores by 1-10 points since implementing a dress code or uniform policy.

NSBA members would first contact other schools, look on the Internet and to the NSBA for information on ways to investigate and implement a solution. Currently, uniform






manufacturers are the only place for schools to obtain information regarding school uniform programs. Classroom's goal is to provide real time information to schools as they discuss implementing a uniform program. Successful programs are first measured by staff observations and parent reaction and then on analytical data. Availability and pricing are the two most important reasons given for choosing a specific school uniform manufacturer as a partner. Uniforms are a cost saver but schools are still having fundraisers, donations and uniform closets for those in need.

Key Findings








- 85% of respondents have been school board members for more than a year; compared to 90% a year ago.
- Members from the Midwest seem to be most interested in school uniforms, followed by the Southeast, Northeast and Southwest. These results mirror our survey last year.
- Of the respondents participating in the survey, 43% represent suburban area schools followed by rural area schools (31%) and urban area schools (23%). 3% of those surveyed had all of these types schools in their districts.
- 92% of members stated that what a student wears to school matters.
- Parent involvement (73%), reading at grade level (68%), inappropriate clothing (65%) and bullying (62%) are some of the problems these NSBA members are currently experiencing in their districts.
- Over 34% of the respondents stated that they have a uniform or dress code policy and 36% stated they are in discussions. Last year, over 23% of the respondents stated that they have a uniform or dress code policy.
- 63% of the respondents stated that the uniform policy is district wide compared to 37% who stated that the policy was campus choice. When district wide, 60% stated the entire district is in uniforms and 40% have uniforms in their elementary schools. This is followed by 30% in middle schools, 10% in Pre-K and 5% in high school.
- 40% of the respondents stated their school or district has been using a dress code program between 1-5 years followed by 39% who have been using dress codes for 5-10 years. 14% of those surveyed have been using dress codes for more than 10 years.
- 61% stated that it takes between one to two years to look at and implement a school uniform policy. 24% stated it takes six months.
- 84% of those schools in uniform have mandatory policies.
- The greatest benefits for school uniforms cited this year is the reduction of peer pressure, prevention of gang violence, reducing disciplinary issues, enhancement of school image and positive effect uniforms has in the classroom.
- 80% of those in uniform stated they consider their program successful.
- 36% of respondents stated that uniforms have helped improve attendance in their schools. The majority of respondents (23%) stated the improvement was between 1-10%. 13% of those surveyed stated attendance improved between 10-50%. 61% stated no change.
- 88% of those asked said uniforms create a positive effect in the classroom
- 86% of those asked felt uniforms have helped improve their school's self image.
- 64% of those surveyed saw a decline in discipline referrals with a school uniform program, 28% of those surveyed saw a 10-25% decline, 25% reported a decline by 1-

- 10%, 11% reported a 25-50% decline and 36% of those respondents reported they have not seen a change in number of discipline referrals in their school.
- 41% of those surveyed reported a decline in gang activity or affiliation in schools using uniforms. 46% of those surveyed stated they do not have gang problems on their campus.
 - 32% of those surveyed reported an improvement in their AYP scores by 1-10 points since implementing a dress code or uniform policy. 6% reported an improvement by 11-25 points, 2% reported an improvement between 25-50 points and 60% reported no change since their program began.
 - 51% of those surveyed reported not seeing improved parent participation since implementing a school uniform or dress code policy.
 - Of the school board members surveyed, 56% stated their teachers support a school uniform program followed by 30% who felt their teachers strongly support school uniforms. 1% of those surveyed felt their teachers did not support such a program.
 - To measure a program's effectiveness, 94% of those surveyed used principal and staff observations. Over 50% also used discipline logs, attendance records, and test scores to measure program effectiveness.
 - Price, comfort and availability of sizes are vital to a successful program. The happier that parents are with the ease of finding uniforms, the easier the program will be to implement. However, 65% of those surveyed felt that a school uniform manufacturer or retailer is not important to their school's success.
 - Over 81% surveyed agreed that school uniforms do save parents money. This data is in line with last year's survey (85%).
 - Donations, uniform closets and fundraisers are the top activities schools use to help those who cannot afford school uniforms. This is the same as last year.
 - 47% of those surveyed responded their school is not in uniforms due to parent objections. 21% felt their school was too small, 37% felt their school did not have problems a uniform or dress code policy would cure and 35% felt students would object.
 - 72% of the NSBA membership would reach out to a sister school or district when investigating implementation of a new uniform/dress code program. 48% stated they would look on the Internet. 47% stated they would contact the NSBA.
 - 32% of those surveyed felt too much pressure is put on school uniform policies.
 - 71% of those surveyed who are not in uniforms felt uniforms are a cost saver over general apparel.
 - As with last year's survey, over 90% stated they do not utilize Title One funds

85% of respondents have been school board members for more than a year. These members have experience working in the community and understand many of the issues their school districts and community are facing.

| How long have you been a school board member? | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Less than 1 year |  | 14.6% | 41 |
| More than 1 year |  | 8.9% | 25 |
| 2-3 years |  | 11.7% | 33 |
| 3-5 years |  | 15.7% | 44 |
| More than 5 years |  | 49.1% | 138 |
| Total Respondents | | | 281 |

Members from the Midwest seem to be the most interested in school uniforms, followed by the Southeast, Northeast and Southwest. The Northwest seems to be the area of the US least interested in school uniforms or dress codes. School Board officials from the Mid – Atlantic states and Canada also expressed interest in this topic.

| Where is your school located? | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Northeast |  | 14.6% | 42 |
| South East |  | 17.4% | 50 |
| West |  | 3.8% | 11 |
| Mid West |  | 43.8% | 126 |
| North West |  | 3.5% | 10 |
| South West |  | 12.8% | 37 |
| Other (please specify) |  | 4.2% | 12 |
| Total Respondents | | | 288 |







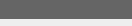


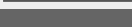

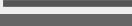
Most of the members who participated in the survey were in suburban area school districts. This is especially interesting, as it continues to show that schools outside large metropolitan cities are looking at school uniform programs. In addition, 3% of those respondents represented districts that had schools in all three types of areas.

| Is your school situated in a/an | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Rural area | | 31% | 89 |
| Suburban area | | 42.9% | 123 |
| Urban area | | 22.6% | 65 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | | 3.5% | 10 |
| Total Respondents | | | 287 |

92% of members stated that what a student wears to school matters. When asked why, participants responded that school uniforms eliminate peer pressure, the distractions of revealing clothes, and gang affiliations and they provide discipline, focus and better self-esteem.

| Does it really matter what students wear to school? | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes | | 91.6% | 261 |
| No | | 8.4% | 24 |
| Total Respondents | | | 285 |

When asked what problems their school or district is currently experiencing, parent involvement, reading at grade level, inappropriate clothing, discipline and bullying were among the most cited issues.

| Does your School or District have problems in any of these areas? Check all that apply. | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Attendance |  | 50% | 37 |
| AYP Target Achievement |  | 58.1% | 43 |
| Bullying |  | 62.2% | 46 |
| Discipline |  | 62.2% | 46 |
| Economic Class Division |  | 48.6% | 36 |
| Fighting |  | 44.6% | 33 |
| Gang Activity |  | 40.5% | 30 |
| Grade Retention |  | 28.4% | 21 |
| Inappropriate Clothing |  | 64.9% | 48 |
| Math Comprehension |  | 50% | 37 |
| Parent Involvement |  | 73% | 54 |
| Reading at Grade Level |  | 67.6% | 50 |
| Total Respondents | | | 74 |

34% of the respondents stated that they have a uniform or dress code policy enacted in their district. This is a rise of over 10% from the 2005 Classroom School Uniform Survey.

84% of those surveyed in school uniforms have mandatory programs with over 80% of those surveyed considering their program to be successful. 88% of respondents felt that school uniforms help create a positive effect in the classroom.

In addition, 63% of those in uniforms stated that their policy was district wide. 40% of uniform programs are in the elementary school, 30% in middle school, 11% in Pre-K and 5% in high schools. This information reinforces the notion that the earlier students start wearing uniforms the easier compliance and program longevity will be.

| Does your school have a uniform or dress code policy? | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes, the entire district is in uniform | | 15.9% | 43 |
| Yes, some schools are in uniform | | 18.1% | 49 |
| No, we are in discussions | | 35.9% | 97 |
| No, we are not interested | | 30% | 81 |
| Total Respondents | | | 270 |

| Have uniforms helped create a positive effect in the classroom? | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes | | 88% | 66 |
| No | | 12% | 9 |
| Total Respondents | | | 75 |


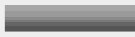


| Is your school uniform policy? | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Voluntary | | 15.5% | 11 |
| Mandatory | | 84.5% | 60 |
| Total Respondents | | | 71 |

| Do you consider your school uniform program successful? | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes | | 80.3% | 61 |
| No | | 19.7% | 15 |
| Total Respondents | | | 76 |




| Is your uniform policy district wide or campus choice | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| District wide | | 62.7% | 52 |
| Campus choice | | 37.3% | 31 |
| Total Respondents | | | 83 |

| If district wide, which schools use school uniforms? | | | |
|--|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| The entire district | | 59.6% | 34 |
| Pre-K | | 10.5% | 6 |
| Elementary schools | | 40.4% | 23 |
| Middle schools | | 29.8% | 17 |
| High schools | | 5.3% | 3 |
| Total Respondents | | | 57 |

41% of the schools or districts 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 14% have been using programs for more than ten years. This information reinforces the longevity and effectiveness of such programs.










| How long has your school or district been using a dress code program? | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Less than 1 year |  | 6.3% | 5 |
| 1-5 years |  | 40.5% | 32 |
| 5-10 years |  | 39.2% | 31 |
| More than 10 years |  | 13.9% | 11 |
| Total Respondents | | | 79 |

Typically schools are taking their time to discuss and implement a school uniform policy with their school and community. Since last year's survey, we can conclude that schools are taking more time to educate the community about the program.

| How long did it take your school to look at and implement a school uniform policy? | | | |
|--|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| 6 months |  | 24.3% | 17 |
| 1-2 years |  | 61.4% | 43 |
| Over 3 years |  | 14.3% | 10 |
| Total Respondents | | | 70 |

| How long did your school district take to educate the community on your program? | | | |
|--|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Less than 1 month | | 4.1% | 3 |
| 1-3 months | | 17.8% | 13 |
| 3-6 months | | 20.5% | 15 |
| 6-12 months | | 31.5% | 23 |
| 1 year | | 15.1% | 11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | | 12.3% | 9 |
| Total Respondents | | | 73 |

Reduction of peer pressure and disciplinary issues, prevention of gang affiliation 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. | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Enhance our school's image |  | 76.6% | 59 |
| Positive effect in the classroom |  | 75.3% | 58 |
| Reduce Peer Pressure |  | 92.2% | 71 |
| Boost Morale |  | 53.2% | 41 |
| Stay focused |  | 72.7% | 56 |
| Prevent gang affiliation |  | 79.2% | 61 |
| Improve attendance |  | 26% | 20 |
| Improve AYP scores |  | 28.6% | 22 |
| Reduce disciplinary issues |  | 76.6% | 59 |
| Total Respondents | | | 77 |

36% of respondents stated that uniforms have helped improve attendance in their schools. Of those who saw improvement, the majority stated the improvement was between 1-10%.. 13% of those surveyed stated attendance improved between 10-50%.

| Have uniforms helped improve attendance? If so, by about how much? | | | |
|--|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| No Change | | 60.9% | 39 |
| 1-10% | | 23.4% | 15 |
| 10%-25% | | 7.8% | 5 |
| 25%-50% | | 4.7% | 3 |
| 50% + | | 3.1% | 2 |
| Total Respondents | | | 64 |

87% of those surveyed felt uniforms have improved their school's self image.

| Do you feel uniforms have helped improve your school's self image? | | | |
|--|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes | | 86.7% | 65 |
| No | | 13.3% | 10 |
| Total Respondents | | | 75 |

94% of schools evaluate the effectiveness of the program based on observations of the principal and key staff. 74% involve the parents and 60% involve the students. The use of data such as discipline logs (58%), attendance records (55%), AYP scores (42%), and test scores (48%) are also used.

| What measures does your school or district have in place to evaluate if the program is working? Check all that apply. | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Principal and staff observations | | 93.7% | 74 |
| Parent comments | | 74.7% | 59 |
| Teacher or school staff comments | | 84.8% | 67 |
| Student comments | | 59.5% | 47 |
| Discipline logs | | 58.2% | 46 |
| Attendance records | | 55.7% | 44 |
| AYP scores | | 41.8% | 33 |
| Test scores | | 48.1% | 38 |
| Total Respondents | | | 79 |

64% of NSBA members using school uniforms in their schools have seen a decline in discipline referrals in their schools. The majority of those responding cited a decline of 10-25%.

| Have you seen a decline in discipline referrals in schools using uniforms? If so, by about how much? | | | |
|--|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| No Change | | 35.9% | 23 |
| 1-10% | | 25% | 16 |
| 10%-25% | | 28.1% | 18 |
| 25%-50% | | 10.9% | 7 |
| 50%+ | | 0% | 0 |
| Total Respondents | | | 64 |



41% of those surveyed stated a decline in gang activity or affiliation in their schools. 46% felt this question was not applicable to their school district.

| Have you seen a decline in gang activity or affiliation in schools using uniforms? | | | |
|--|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes | | 40.8% | 29 |
| No | | 12.7% | 9 |
| N/A | | 46.5% | 33 |
| Total Respondents | | | 71 |




40% of NSBA members surveyed stated their AYP scores improved between 1 and 50 points since implementing a dress code or school uniform policy. The majority of these cited a rise between 1-10 points.

| Have your AYP scores improved since implementing a dress code or uniform policy? If so, by how many points? | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| No Change | | 60.3% | 38 |
| 1-10 | | 31.7% | 20 |
| 11-25 | | 6.3% | 4 |
| 26-50 | | 1.6% | 1 |
| 50+ | | 0% | 0 |
| Total Respondents | | | 63 |

51% of those surveyed have not seen improved parent participation since implementing a school uniform or dress code program. This information is surprising as parent involvement and commitment is needed when discussing a school uniform program.



| Is your school seeing improved parent participation since implementing your school uniform or dress code program? | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes |  | 48.5% | 32 |
| No |  | 51.5% | 34 |
| Total Respondents | | | 66 |

87% 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? | | | |
|--|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Support strongly |  | 30.8% | 24 |
| Support |  | 56.4% | 44 |
| Neutral |  | 11.5% | 9 |
| Do not support |  | 1.3% | 1 |
| Total Respondents | | | 78 |

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. Ironically, when asked if a uniform manufacturer is important to a program's success, 66% of those surveyed felt a school uniform manufacturer or retailer was not important.






| What features did your school consider important when considering a school uniform? | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | Very Important | Important | Neutral | Somewhat Important | Not Important | N/A | Response Average |
| Availability of sizes | 58% (40) | 26% (18) | 1% (1) | 1% (1) | 6% (4) | 7% (5) | 1.61 |
| Price | 67% (49) | 18% (13) | 1% (1) | 3% (2) | 7% (5) | 4% (3) | 1.59 |
| Comfort and fit | 43% (29) | 37% (25) | 7% (5) | 1% (1) | 4% (3) | 6% (4) | 1.79 |
| Variety of styles | 25% (17) | 21% (14) | 19% (13) | 9% (6) | 19% (13) | 7% (5) | 2.75 |
| Made in the USA | 8% (5) | 16% (10) | 23% (15) | 6% (4) | 20% (13) | 27% (17) | 3.21 |
| Choice of colors | 33% (23) | 36% (25) | 4% (3) | 4% (3) | 14% (10) | 9% (6) | 2.25 |
| Stain resistant materials | 19% (13) | 41% (28) | 12% (8) | 3% (2) | 13% (9) | 12% (8) | 2.43 |
| Available in local stores | 59% (43) | 22% (16) | 3% (2) | 4% (3) | 7% (5) | 5% (4) | 1.71 |
| Available on the internet | 2% (1) | 8% (5) | 24% (15) | 6% (4) | 31% (19) | 29% (18) | 3.80 |
| Total Respondents | | | | | | | 72 |

| Is a school uniform manufacturer or retailer important to your program's success? | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes |  | 34.2% | 25 |
| No |  | 65.8% | 48 |
| Total Respondents | | | 73 |




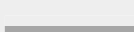

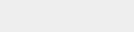
Over 81% of those who took the survey with uniforms in their school agreed that school uniforms do save parents money. Those respondents not in uniforms agreed that school uniforms were a cost saver over general apparel (72%). However, when asked why their school was not considering uniforms, 24% cited price of uniforms as a factor.



| Do the parents in your school find school uniforms a cost saver over general apparel? | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes |  | 81.6% | 62 |
| No |  | 18.4% | 14 |
| Total Respondents | | | 76 |

Donations, 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. | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Fundraisers |  | 23.1% | 18 |
| Uniform closets |  | 66.7% | 52 |
| Donations |  | 73.1% | 57 |
| Assistance League's Operation School Bell |  | 3.8% | 3 |
| General fund support |  | 20.5% | 16 |
| Total Respondents | | | 78 |

When asked why their school would not consider uniforms 47% of those surveyed responded that parents would object. 37% stated that their school does not have problems uniforms would resolve. However, if parents were interested in school uniforms 91% stated their district would consider such a policy.



| Why is your school not considering school uniforms? | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Tried, no success |  | 6.3% | 9 |
| Small school or district |  | 21% | 30 |
| Students would object |  | 34.3% | 49 |
| Parents would object |  | 46.9% | 67 |
| Cost |  | 23.8% | 34 |
| No problems uniforms would cure |  | 37.1% | 53 |
| Total Respondents | | | 143 |



| If parents were interested in school uniforms, would your district consider a policy? | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes |  | 91.2% | 146 |
| No |  | 8.8% | 14 |
| Total Respondents | | | 160 |

School board members overwhelmingly stated the need for other schools and organizations to share information. If considering a school uniform program, 72% of those surveyed stated that they would contact a school or district in uniform for more information. 48% would use the Internet and 47% would reach out to the NSBA. This survey reinforces the need for organizations to discuss school uniform programs.

| Where or how would you investigate implementing a new program? | | | |
|--|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| The Library |  | 7.4% | 11 |
| The Internet |  | 48.3% | 72 |
| Calling a school uniform manufacturer |  | 26.2% | 39 |
| Contacting a school or district in uniform |  | 71.8% | 107 |
| Visiting a uniform store |  | 7.4% | 11 |
| Visiting your favorite local retailer |  | 8.1% | 12 |
| Contacting the NSBA |  | 47% | 70 |
| Total Respondents | | | 149 |

Of those respondents not using school uniforms, 32% of those surveyed felt there was too much pressure put on school uniforms. In addition 72% felt school uniforms were a cost saver over general apparel.

| Do you believe too much pressure is put on school uniform policies | | | |
|--|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes |  | 31.8% | 49 |
| No |  | 68.2% | 105 |
| Total Respondents | | | 154 |

| Do you believe school uniforms are a cost saver over general apparel? | | | |
|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| Yes |  | 71.7% | 114 |
| No |  | 28.3% | 45 |
| Total Respondents | | | 159 |

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.