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Argumentative Essay:

Why All Schools in the United States Should Require Uniforms

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Why All Schools in the United States Should Require Uniforms

Over the past few years, more and more schools in the United States are making uniforms mandatory, right from daycare to high school. Before, school uniforms were only required in private schools but as schools all over the world move towards standardized teaching materials and tests, so did their view on uniforms. Making school uniforms mandatory was decided by school administrators in an effort to foster a healthier and safer environment where students can do what they have to do at school – to learn. This essay aims to argue that school uniforms should be mandatory as it will benefit the students greatly.

With public school students used to having freedom over choosing what they wear any day of the week, some of them felt restricted and are against the idea of having to wear school uniforms. Students who are used to having control over their clothing preferences refuse the idea of school administrators taking away an outlet where they could express themselves. Most bask in the idea where they can express themselves in fashion, while some prefer having school uniforms to wear all year round. The argument over having to wear school uniforms is something that students, parents, and school administrators have something to say about and is unending.

The mandatory wearing of school uniforms in schools continues to rise in the United States over the past years and currently, approximately 20% of public schools now require their students to wear school uniforms. These standard school uniforms are devoid of fancy jackets, trendy tops, and flashy shoes and are instead typically just a button-down shirt or polo shirt paired with khaki or navy pants, shorts, or skirts. This

may vary per season and per school. For some students, wearing school uniforms means losing a part of their identity. For some, it means protection.

Having to wear school uniforms decreases the chances of students getting distracted with how they look which translates to them focusing more on their academics (Chen 2021). Also, it creates a safer environment because school uniforms eliminate the harm caused by bullying over the clothing choices of an individual and also gang violence. Additionally, outsiders or strangers are easier to spot in a sea of students wearing school uniforms as opposed to all of them wearing different clothing.

For parents, having their children wear school uniforms is both practical and cost-effective. When schools have not yet implemented that their students wear uniforms, parents get worried about not having enough money to support their child's fashion choices as it would require them to buy from the best brands which are costly. With school uniforms, they could only buy a few pairs that will last the whole academic year and thus cutting unnecessary expenses.

School uniforms improve a student's sense of belongingness, school pride, and community spirit (ProCon.org 2020). This works especially well for schools which have distinguished or non-standard designs and colors. In the United Kingdom, school uniforms look different from school to school instead of having a standardized design that students across different schools can wear, which happens in most public schools in the United States. Furthermore, a study found that for some students, wearing a uniform is equivalent of them being part of a team.

Contrary to popular belief, wearing school uniforms would not trample on a student's individuality and sense of style as they are still free to accessorize and do

something with their hair or piercings, However, students are still made to adhere with the dress code set by the school. And while this may still be restricted for some, only clothing items that display gang colors and insignia are not allowed in some schools as mandated by the US Department of Education's Manual on School Uniforms (ProCon.org 2020). Students can be creative in choosing their bags, socks, and hairstyles still.

Lastly, in the school administrators' and educators' perspective, school uniforms maximize that a student spends in class instead of spending time with the guidance or disciplinary office because they have failed to follow the school's dress code. Because some students from public schools think that they can dress as they wish in school, this may result to some not conforming to the school regulations and may cause them to lose valuable time they could have spent learning in class.

In an article written by Dr. Alan Hilfer in 2009 entitled Disadvantages of a School Uniform Policy, he shares that he agrees with the idea of schools requiring their students to wear uniform because "Uniforms do eliminate competition, pressure, and assaults perpetrated by kids on younger kids for their sneakers and possessions. They also allow some kids to focus better, especially in the lower grades... [However], clothes are a source of expression for children, and as kids get older, they become increasingly resentful of uniforms." (Hilfer 2009). So, if most students are reluctant on following the dress code set by the school administrators, then having students take part in the design process of the school uniform may help. By having students help designing the school uniforms, chances are they will be more interested in wearing it as they have

contributed in making it and that they will not see it as too old-fashioned for their taste.

Not limiting the student's choice of accessories can also help the case.

With that, mandating school uniforms are really to the benefit of students. This may not seem to be the case for some students, but if studied more closely, one will find that the pros definitely outweigh the cons. Wearing school uniforms is definitely beneficial for a student's creativity on how to better express themselves no matter the circumstance, give them a sense of belongingness and community spirit, help in their own way with their family's financials, and have more time devoted to actually learning and studying in school.

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