



HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL UNIFORM FORUM

Welcome

Overview



- Why we are here
- How we got here
- Tentative Timeline
- Sharing of data
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Input from the Community
- Questions and Answers

Why Uniforms in Harford County Public Schools?

- The Board of Education is trying to build a sense of community in schools and give students a sense of belonging, in addition to a safe and secure environment.
- Part of the Board of Education's five year strategic plan.
 - **Benchmark** - *Explore the use of uniforms to promote social equality and focus on learning.*
 - A program for children to wear uniforms in all HCPS schools will be explored.
 - The Uniform Committee will present information and make recommendations to the Board offering options in the spring of January 2009 regarding the implementation of school uniforms.

How we got here

Would the use of school uniforms help us?

- ▣ Principal and Parent Perspective
- ▣ Some researchers suggest
 - Improve image of the school
 - Improve classroom discipline
 - Builds self-esteem and sense of belonging
 - Prevents children from wearing “gang colors”
 - Dissipates arguments when kids get dressed
 - Reduces peer pressure for kids who are “picked on” because of their clothes
 - Creates a “level playing field” among students
 - More often parents initiate the discussion regarding school uniforms
- ▣ Student Perspective
 - Eliminates “acting like a thug” because when you’re not dressed like that, you don’t act like that

How we got here

Would the use of school uniforms help us?

Some Research suggests:

- ▣ Achievement is not affected (ETS)
- ▣ Attendance, behavior and drug use is not affected (Brunsma & Rockquemore)
- ▣ Anecdotal evidence and perceptions offer support for uniform implementation

Principal Perspective

- Attendance is not affected

Parent Perspective

- Kids' individuality is lost
- Uniforms reduce their "say" about what their child wears to school

Student Perspective

- They want a voice in the decision
- Kids hate uniforms "on principle"

Timeline

- September 2007 – The committee began working on the exploration of utilizing school uniforms in Harford County
- November 2007 – Interest Survey was completed
- January 2008 – Student input on the design of the uniforms
- December 2008 – Forum presentations completed
- Spring 2009 – Informational report given to the Board of Education

Sharing of Data

- Approximately 60,000 forms were sent to the schools.
 - ▣ 28,600 were returned for scanning.
- In addition, the Committee invited public comment on the school system's website.
 - ▣ More than 800 individuals submitted comments.
 - ▣ Comments were recorded and were available to Board members.
- Analysis of the forms showed that participants included more than 16,000 parents, 10,000 students, 1880 teachers, and 136 school administrators.
- Teachers and school administrators expressed the most favorable attitude towards uniforms, with more than three out of four indicating support.
- Parents' responses were divided, with 58.4% indicating agreement and 41.6% indicating disagreement.
- Students indicated they are opposed to school uniforms.

Frequently Asked Questions

- How will the decision be made? How will the implementation of school uniforms take place?
 - ▣ After reviewing input from all of the stakeholders and information from community members, the Board of Education will review the information in the spring and make the decision whether or not to move forward.
- What will the uniforms look like? How much will the uniforms cost? How will the ordering of uniforms take place?
 - ▣ Once the decision is made by the Board of Education to proceed with a policy for use of school uniforms, information –including student input - will be gathered by the Committee then disseminated regarding the style, cost and ordering of uniforms.

Community Input

- Form groups with your table.
- You will be given four questions to discuss.
- Choose someone at the table to record your responses. You will be given 45 minutes to answer these questions. A bell will sound to move you from one question to the next.
- Facilitators will be available for answering questions.

The three questions

- 1. What do you perceive are the benefits of school uniforms and if you are against uniforms, what are your concerns?
- 2. What would you like to see our school uniforms look like, and what articles of clothing should and should not be included?
- 3. Should we implement a phase-in that starts year one with elementary schools, year two at middle schools and year three will be high school, or all grade levels at one time?