

School Uniforms; "Dressed for Success? The Effect of School Uniforms on Student Achievement and Behavior"

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School uniforms are correlated with improved attendance rates for middle and high school students and lower teacher-attrition rates at the elementary school level, but appear to have little effect otherwise on student behavior and achievement, a report concludes.

In the report, released this month, the National Bureau of Economic Research, a nonprofit organization based in Cambridge, Mass., focuses on data from an unidentified large urban school district in the southwestern United States. Citing a recent uptick in the prevalence of school uniform requirements nationwide, particularly in urban districts, the report tries to shed light on the sparsely covered topic of how clothing might affect students' academic performance.

It notes that in 2005, 14 percent of public schools mandated the use of uniforms, up from 5 percent in 1995. Despite that trend, researchers found no statistical difference between students in schools with and without uniforms in the district they studied.

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