

Mr Geoff Howard, MP  
Chair  
Education and Training Committee  
Parliament House  
Spring Street  
East Melbourne VIC 3002  
[etc@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:etc@parliament.vic.gov.au)

4 May 2007

Dear Mr Howard,

Please accept this submission to the Education and Training Committee's inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools.

We have chiefly addressed the following points:

- the benefits and costs of mandatory school uniforms (and)
- the views of school communities about dress codes and school uniforms.

We hope that the information we have provided helps contribute the perspective of school students to your report.

We would be very happy to further inform to the Committee, should you wish to ask us anything else.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute our views.

Yours sincerely

10C (Raymond Au, Bircan Houssein, Tyrone O'Connor, Michael Tran, George Sotiriadis, Ilkcan Houssein, Chantelle Schembri, Diana Ta, Daniel Tran, Deen Coward, Idil Yussuf, Dolly Le)

# Submission to the Inquiry into dress codes and school uniforms in Victorian schools

## Introduction

This submission has been written by 10C English students at Braybrook College:

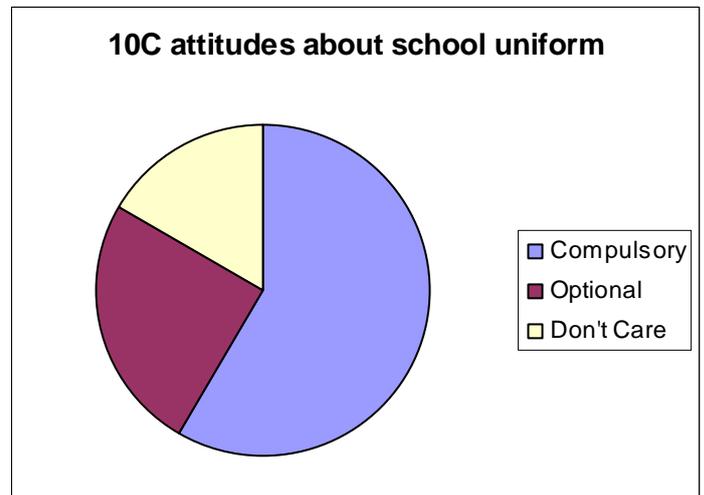
Raymond Au  
Bircan Houssein  
Tyrone O'Connor  
Michael Tran  
George Sotiriadis  
Ilkcan Houssein  
Chantelle Schembri  
Diana Ta  
Daniel Tran  
Deen Coward  
Idil Yussuf  
Dolly Le

Overall, the summary of this class's attitudes on school uniform are summed up on this pie graph.

Most students believed uniforms should be compulsory, which is the current situation at Braybrook College. Three people believed uniform should be optional and two had no opinion. No one in this class was in favour of abolishing the compulsory rule about wearing uniform.

10C decided to address the inquiry under the following sub-headings:

- Benefits of Compulsory School Uniform
- Cost of School Uniform
- Style of School Uniform



## Benefits of Compulsory School Uniform (by Michael, Daniel, Bircan, George)

We believe school uniforms should be compulsory. The reasons for this include: School uniforms encourage students to focus more on their school work and studies and not the latest trends and items of clothing. In addition, if school uniforms were compulsory in every school, certain students who cannot afford the latest item of clothing will not have to worry about bullying because of their financial problems. They will also not have to worry about peer pressure. Students will also not have to worry about rumours and gossip about how they are wearing the same item of clothing that they were wearing the previous day.

A school with compulsory school uniforms gives the school a neat, tidy and respectful environment. This will encourage more parents to enrol into the particular school and this will in turn encourage the school to broaden the things they offer to students like facilities and therefore build a strong reputation for the school and maybe its community.

### **Cost of school uniform (by Tyrone, Deen and Raymond)**

Our group discussed the cost of school uniforms. At Braybrook College the costs are currently:

- Shirts are \$30.00
- Pants are \$35.00
- Skirts are \$25.00
- Dresses are \$55.00
- Windcheaters (cotton) are \$24.00
- Sport shirts are \$20.00
- Woollen jumper: \$55.00
- Jacket: \$35.00

As a group we believe that the cost of the school uniform is too expensive for some students at our school. We hear rumours that more sophisticated uniforms, for example, tie, blazer et cetera will be brought into the school and soon it will become compulsory.

If the school brings in more 'expensive' uniforms, then underprivileged students will struggle to pay for them and not have enough to pay for their other schooling needs. As this is a state school the majority of students that attend the school are from under privileged families, and therefore the cost of uniform will greatly impact upon the child's future and family's financial situation.

If the child's family is in a financial difficulty, the government should introduce a uniform subsidy for family uniform prices, as everything is currently on a price rise. A subsidy should be introduced, not only for families to have a more secure financial state, but also so the child has an ideal school uniform that represents him/her as an individual who is equal no matter what the family's situations is like. Perhaps this should be measured by whether the family is entitled to a health care card or not.

## Style of school uniform (by Ilkcan, Diana, Idil, Dolly and Chantelle)

At the moment our school uniform is:

- polo shirt – white with college logo
- windcheater or woollen jumper – navy (7-10) and maroon (VCE) with college logo
- pants, skirt or shorts (students can wear any style as long as they do not have side pockets or features): navy (7-10) and black (VCE)
- Summer dress
- Sports polo shirt (for interschool sport) – navy with white stripe and college logo

We believe our current school uniform is good, but our windcheaters fade, so we should all have woollen jumpers. We also dislike the fact that we have to wear white, navy, black socks and only black shoes. We should be allowed to wear any socks or shoes.



Bircan, Diana and Dolly



Diana, George and Dolly

If we get blazers and ties, we will become like a private school. We don't think we should try and be something we're not.

The materials used for our uniforms are okay but our white shirts make us itchy and uncomfortable (although we have got used to it).

We also have the concern that if we have to wear school uniform, no one will see the 'real you' or your personality.

We would like to see changes to the following:

- Our school jackets should be less puffer and have a change of fabric. At the moment they are see-through, and are like wearing plastic.
- Shoes shouldn't have to be the one colour (at the moment they have to be fully black).
- Hair ties and band and socks don't have to be navy, black or white.
- Boys should wear ties, because they look good.
- Girls should continue to be allowed to wear skirts if they want.
- Girls should have limits to how short their skirts are allowed to be.
- It's important to have hats but we should be allowed to express our own identity through wearing a hat of our choice.
- People who wear a religious item as part of their beliefs should be allowed to, such as a hijab as part of school uniform.