

Good Evening and thank you for this opportunity to delegate to the Board of Trustees.

I am parent of two children who attend St. Basil The Great High School

The reason for my delegation is to express concern that the Board of Trustees passed a motion regarding limiting the enforcement of the school uniform policy in 2020-2021, during the hybrid learning period of the pandemic. I believe the original motion constitutes a policy change that was rash and undertaken without the proper consultation or consideration for the benefits of school uniforms in our community. I am an avid supporter of school uniforms and would like to express the benefits of enforcing this policy in three ways that are supported by Academic Research (in a publication that summarizes a decade of research and debate on school uniforms). I would be happy to provide this information to you if requested (David L. Brunσμα, Rowman and Littlefield 2006)

First: Value

- I believe that the school uniform is good value and this is supported by research and facts.
- For many parents, students who are not wearing the school uniform will be subject to peer pressure and will (in many cases) demand much higher priced apparel. As an example, a Nike Golf Shirt is currently priced at Sport Check for \$65, whereas the current school uniform price for a golf shirt is \$14.99 - \$32.99, depending on the style a particular school chooses and whether the school is elementary or high school.
- For students in need who cannot afford this branded item, which I believe is at the root of your argument, their disparity will be even greater. Without the school uniform, you will clearly be able to identify the 'haves' and 'have nots'.
- Although some may argue that school is only for a few hours a day, I believe it still matters. Our children are proud to wear their uniforms.
- I am aware of many programs across the school board to help students in need with their school uniform purchase and, as a Catholic Community, I would be stunned if we did not pool our resources to help these students.

Second: Safety

- I am very concerned about the fact that, without school uniforms and with students wearing masks, that it will be very challenging to identify students coming in and out of the schools.
- With staggered entries and very different student flows in and out of school, the normal security measures in place at the school will have to change and we will have fewer staff to handle student inflows. A uniform is a very easy identifier. I understand there are student cards, but a student card cannot be seen from far distances and is challenging to oversee. Also, how much more stress can we expect to put on our School Administration?

Third: Spirit

- Our tradition in this school board is to have a school uniform which proudly displays our Catholic Tradition.
- I don't think we should lose sight of the fact that this unifying series of symbols is one way that our students feel like they are part of a community.
- The reality is that we don't know how long this pandemic will last and we want to preserve, not destroy this tradition. I was personally looking forward to seeing my child in school uniform this coming year as it was one way to preserve a sense of normalcy.

In closing, I would like to reiterate that I believe the benefits of value, safety and spirit are three critical reasons that we must keep this policy in place. Not enforcing this policy is tantamount to cancelling it all together and I am not confident that if this motion stands that we will ever be able to reinstitute the school uniform policy in our schools.

Thank you for your consideration