More and More Schools Are Telling Students What to Wear. BY LAUREN TARSHIS

It was bad enough that Sam Gebicki had to learn the ropes at a brand-new school. It was bad enough that she had to say goodbye to her old friends. But what really stressed her out?

“The uniform,” says Sam, 12. “When I first saw it, I couldn’t believe it.”

At her new school, Sam would have to wear a white shirt, a plaid jumper, black shoes, and a necktie. Yes, a necktie. She would wear this outfit every day, rain or shine. There would be no more jeans, no more T-shirts, no more leggings or Crocs.

“I wanted to cry,” she says.

But is wearing a school uniform really something to shed tears over? Many experts insist that uniforms improve learning, make schools safer, and even help students feel happier. It’s no wonder that the number of schools requiring uniforms is growing.

Today more than 18 percent of students in the U.S. wear uniforms. In the past, it was mostly private schools that required them. But more and more public schools are bringing on the jumpers and the blazers. In Cleveland, Boston, Chicago, and Miami, more than half of all public schools require uniforms. In New Orleans, kids at 95 percent of schools are decked out in them.

Dress Without Stress

Many principals in high-crime areas say uniforms can transform a school by making students and teachers safer. Troublemakers can’t hide dangerous objects under baggy clothes. Fights don’t break out over expensive jackets or fancy sneakers. Kids can’t show up to class wearing gang colors or symbols.

Even in quiet towns, uniforms are catching on. When all students
What Do You Think?  
Are school uniforms a good idea? Go back to the article to find arguments that support each side of this debate. Write the information on the lines below.

**YES**  
BRING ON THE KHAKIS!

1. It makes schools safer.

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2. 

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3. 

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**NO**  
I CAN’T GIVE UP MY JEANS!

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2. 

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3. 

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EXAMINE POINTS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE DEBATE—AS WELL AS YOUR OWN BELIEFS—and decide what you think about this issue. State your opinion in one sentence below. This can become a thesis statement for an essay on this topic.

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