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## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Councilmember José Huizar Supports School Uniforms for LAUSD**

*Councilmember's legislation to support school uniforms for LAUSD backed by City Attorney*

**LOS ANGELES (Feb. 18, 2009)** – Hoping to create a more focused study environment, Councilmember José Huizar introduced legislation today calling for the City's support of an LAUSD school uniform policy.

“I can tell you from my experience as School Board President, school uniforms help create a sense of order and camaraderie among students and allow them to focus on academics,” said Councilmember José Huizar. “For many of our students in LAUSD – particularly those from lower-income communities –the fact that they cannot afford name-brand clothes is a daily distraction they can do without.”

Primarily used in private schools, uniforms have gained favor among public schools. In 1994, the Long Beach Unified School District initiated its school uniform policy and saw major drops in violent incidents on its campuses. Today, approximately 10 percent of public schools nationwide have switched to school uniforms, with many seeing an increased focus on academics, as well as decreases in violent incidents and other discipline problems, according to published reports.

“School uniforms by themselves will not solve all school safety problems, but they are an essential contributing factor to discipline and safety,” said City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo. “In light of the growing number of criminal street gangs and the violence they pose to our students, our schools and the areas around them, I applaud and fully support Councilmember Huizar and all of our partners on the City Council for addressing the issue of school uniforms.”

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In addition to alleviating pressure on students to dress in fashionable and costly clothes, schools that switch to school uniforms report that violent incidents are often reduced since “cliques” or gangs are not as identifiable, experts say. School uniforms also help administrators identify non-students who should not be on campus.

Besides Long Beach, public school uniform policies have enjoyed success in New York City, Washington D.C. and Philadelphia, to name a few. Locally, school uniforms are being used in Mayor Villaraigosa’s Partnership for LA Schools, as well as by all major charter operators.

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