



L & M Dry Cleaners Issues Uniform Care Guidance as NRF Reports Record Apparel Spending

NRF's 2026 back-to-school survey puts K-12 clothing spending at \$250.29 per family, days before Palm Beach County classes begin Aug. 10.

NORTH PALM BEACH, FL, UNITED STATES, August 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The School District of Palm Beach County begins the 2026-2027 school year on Monday, Aug. 10, and families across the county are finalizing wardrobes that have to last through the May 27 last day of classes. L & M Dry Cleaners, a family-owned dry cleaner operating in North Palm Beach since 1972, has issued guidance on extending the service life of school uniforms, dress-code apparel and school formalwear.

The National Retail Federation and Prosper Insights & Analytics reported in their 2026 Back-to-School survey, based on responses from 7,677 consumers collected July 1 through July 8, that families with students in elementary through high school plan to spend an average of \$863.86 this season. Clothing and accessories account for \$250.29 of that figure, or \$12.5 billion nationally, with an additional \$174.01 per family going to shoes. Total K-12 spending is projected at a record \$43.3 billion, up from \$39.4 billion in 2025 and above the previous survey high of \$41.5 billion set in 2023.

That spending lands on a concentrated set of garments in Palm Beach County. The district reports that it is the 10th largest in the nation and the fifth largest in Florida, serving more than 193,000 students. School Board Policy 5.182 establishes three tiers of student dress requirements: a District-wide Dress Code that applies to every campus, School Specific (Standard) Dress Codes, and Higher Standard (Uniform) Dress Codes adopted at individual schools. Under the uniform tier, a student wears the same two or three garment types every instructional day for roughly 10 months.

Repetition, not accident, drives most uniform replacement. Collar and cuff soil accumulates gradually on polo shirts and oxford shirts, and body oils bind to blended fabrics faster in South Florida's summer humidity than in drier climates. The visible result arrives in October, when garments purchased in August start to look permanently gray or yellowed at the contact points.

Heat is the mechanism that makes the damage permanent, according to L & M Dry Cleaners. School uniform polos are typically a cotton and polyester blend, and a high-heat dryer cycle sets

whatever collar and cuff soil is already present in the fabric. Once that soil is heat-set, standard laundering no longer lifts it. The garment reads as worn out while the fibers themselves remain structurally sound, which is why replacement often happens earlier than the fabric warrants.

The Federal Trade Commission's Care Labeling Rule, 16 CFR Part 423, requires manufacturers and importers of textile wearing apparel to attach permanent care labels stating the regular care needed for ordinary use of the product. Blended uniform fabrics commonly carry warm or cold wash and low-heat tumble instructions that get overridden during high-volume family laundry cycles.

L & M Dry Cleaners recommends four practices for the 2026-2027 school year. Uniform shirts should be pretreated at the collar and cuffs before washing rather than after a stain becomes visible. Blended garments should be dried on low heat or hung, since high heat is what makes soil permanent. Blazers, jackets and formal school attire should be cleaned on a seasonal schedule rather than only when soiling is obvious, because the same body oils that mark cotton also break down wool over time. Finally, hems and waistbands should be adjusted before the first day rather than after, since growth-related alterations completed mid-semester take a garment out of rotation during the school week.

The days before Aug. 10 are also the practical window for [school uniform alterations](#), since apparel purchased during June and July promotional events has typically been stored through the two most humid months of the South Florida year. Garments held in sealed plastic retail packaging during that period can carry storage odor and set-in creases that are simpler to correct before daily wear begins than after.

L & M Dry Cleaners has operated at the same North Palm Beach location on U.S. Highway 1 since 1972 and provides pickup and delivery across approximately 20 Palm Beach County communities.

About L & M Dry Cleaners

L & M Dry Cleaners is a family-owned, owner-operated dry cleaning and garment care business established in 1972 in North Palm Beach, Florida. The company provides dry cleaning, wash and fold laundry service, alterations and tailoring through an in-house seamstress, leather and suede cleaning, linen cleaning and area rug cleaning. Free pickup and delivery is available across northern Palm Beach County. The business operates Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. More information is available at <https://lnmcleaners.com/>.

L & M Dry Cleaners

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