Program Established: 1995
Purpose of Program:
Assistance League of Charlotte, through its Operation School Bell Program (OSB), provides new clothing for children in need in Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools (CMS). The program's goal is to enhance self-esteem, promote learning and encourage regular school attendance.

Location and Hours of Traditional OSB Program:
Assistance League Center, 3405 South Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC
During the school year, Operation School Bell operates two daily sessions on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., serving 50 to 60 children each day.

Procedures:
Traditional OSB:
New clothing is provided in the Operation School Bell program facility, located in the Assistance League Center. Students are referred from high poverty CMS elementary schools by counselors and are brought by bus to the Center to select their new items with the help of Assistance League member volunteers. Each child receives a jacket, two uniforms (polo shirts and pants), a multi-pack of underwear and socks, a hygiene kit and a book.

Outreach OSB:
OSB donates new clothing (two uniform shirts/navy pants per child), packets of school supplies, books and hygiene kits to elementary students in need. A new initiative that clothes middle school students at an offsite retail store will be continued, and enhanced hygiene kits for this age group will be provided. School supplies are distributed mid-year when students’ fall supplies have been depleted and are also provided to children in conjunction with our Operation Check Hunger Mobile Pantries. Assistance League provides hygiene kits, socks and underwear to CMS McKinney-Vento, a program serving homeless children from K-12. Crisis Assistance Ministries receives complete uniforms for distribution through their counseling program. The number served by Outreach depends on available clothing stock and the program budget.

National Impact:
Operation School Bell, the signature philanthropic program for the 120 chapters of Assistance League nationwide, served 331,000 children last year with combined annual budgets of more than $15 million.

Funding: Operation School Bell is funded through foundation grants, private and corporate donations, chapter fundraising events and the Assistance League Thrift Shop.

During the 2018-2019 school year, Operation School Bell served 2,024 elementary children in 25 CMS schools at the Assistance League Center and an additional 7,328 children in K-12 schools through OSB outreach initiatives.