



March 6, 2009

School uniforms are a good thing

Earlier this week students and parents attended the Fremont School Board meeting to voice their opinions on a newly approved school uniform policy.

Two students presented 87 signatures from other students who are against the uniform campus wear policy, which will begin with the 2009-10 school year for grades seven and eight. Their argument -- one reason children go to public schools is so they don't have to wear particular clothing. Some parents spoke in favor of the policy; others said it would limit individuality.

Other large public school systems throughout the country have adopted voluntary or mandatory uniform policies. Many of these schools report that uniforms have decreased the fighting and violence that develops over issues of clothing. Those children whose parents can't afford the newest trend in clothes or the latest designer brands often are often victims of teasing. School uniforms also are more economical than investing in the latest fashion trends that will be out of style next month.

School officials also reported that when uniform policies are in place, students take a more serious approach to their academics. Students are better able to focus on learning.

Fremont's policy calls for pants, skirts/jumpers that must be khaki, black or navy. Pants cannot drag on the floor. Shirts must be dark purple, white, navy or gray.

All students will come to school dressed appropriately. No more fashion shows. No more outlandish trends. No more clothing distractions.

School should be about education, but it is often just as much about who has the latest designer jeans, shoes or handbag. Social standing becomes more about a child's economic status, when it should be about the individual's character.

Superintendent Traci McCaudy said it simply during the school board meeting, "Campus wear is not going to create a miracle and make us perfect," she said. "It helps eliminate that one more student distraction."

She is right. School uniforms aren't the magic solution, but they do eliminate one more distraction and allow students to get back to the business of learning.
