

Future Planning Ad Hoc Committee
Parent Forum on Dress Code
October 16, 2008 5:30 PM
CIBA Lecture Hall

PRESENT

Karen Howe, Chairperson
Robert Damaschi
Anita Morrison

ALSO PRESENT

Mary Alice Dwyer Hughes
Ram Aberasturia
Dorese Roberts
Marcus Oladell, IV
Marion H. Martinez, Superintendent
Debbie A. Kaprove, Assistant Superintendent

Forum opened at 5:30 PM by Mary Alice Dwyer Hughes. Ground rules read and opening statement made by Karen Howe. Public participation invited. Eighteen individuals sign-ed up to address board members.

Comments included:

- Staff at EHMS are generally in favor of uniforms or a standardized dress code. Remove uncertainty of determining how short is too short, how baggy is too baggy, how much revealed is inappropriate. Prohibited list is extensive. Up to 40% of administrators day may be consumed by dealing with appearance issues. Individuality expressed through other means. Ex: Team Day shirts, designed by students
- Music Department has required uniform dress code for performances for many years. Student attitude much improved when appearance is as required. In favor of uniforms. Suggested “bottoms” be dealt with first—pants/skirts and footwear, Then move on to require uniforms on “tops”.
- Hartford Public High School Law & Government Academy requires shirt & tie for boys, neat appearance for girls. Current student appearance @ EHMS is “atrocious”. Particularly offensive is boys trying to hold up pants in order to walk. Students may be changing clothes between when they leave home and when they arrive in class. In favor of uniforms.
- Corporate employees who wear uniforms save time, money, like the convenience. Uniforms would save time, decrease conflict over clothes, and provide quick identification of students who belong at that school
- Uniforms would save money, decrease peer pressure
- Uniforms would save money, decrease teasing over appearance
- Uniforms would be a unifying factor, increase person and school/community pride. Teaches importance of dressing appropriately for events of value. Implies value of education. Currently much time is consumed by teachers dealing with clothes
- Uniforms would be good (student)
- No uniforms. Uniforms involved in a previous uniform policy were poor quality, expensive. No research supports theory that uniforms improve school behavior. Shoes, outerwear and accessories must also be addressed, as they continue to be status symbols. Uniforms would be burden to transient population, both new to EHPS and within district. Student appearance not an issue at elementary level, make policy where issues are—secondary level. Many districts do not have uniforms. It remains the parents’ responsibility to dress children appropriately. Reform current policy, having teachers enforce expectations. We should honor the diversity, without disregarding cultural preferences.
- No uniforms or standard dress code. Students may refuse to attend, or simply refuse to comply; which may cause disturbances for staff and students. Students want freedom to wear whatever they want
- Uniforms would identify students who belong, reduce distractions in classrooms, and increase respect for teachers. Student appearance is the parents responsibility. Uniforms would promote increased pride and respect for self and community. Students have many after-school hours to express their individuality. Uniforms may be unfair to those who dress appropriately now, but what is best for the entire school community should be considered. Uniforms would be more affordable. Allowances could be made for accessorizing
- No uniforms. Allow jeans (student)

- Uniforms would reduce distractions in school, save money
- Not in favor of uniforms (phone message, delivered by Mary Alice Dwyer Hughes)
- Uniforms provided structure, wore as a student. Students should not have a choice, this is a school board decision.
- Uniforms increase pride in appearance, improve behavior, increase self-esteem and provide easy identification with school community

The next forum will be on Tuesday, October 21, 2008 at 5:30 in the CIBA Lecture Hall. Having not other members of the public who wished to address the board, the forum was closed at 6:20 by Karen Howe.

Respectfully,
Carrie Van de Berg
Secretary