

School Uniforms

There was an assembly at the middle school last week. Principal Christine West made an announcement to the students. Beginning next fall, all 6th, 7th and 8th graders will be required to wear uniforms to school.

Students will be required to wear pants that are khaki or black. Girls can wear khaki or black skirts. The skirt must come at least down to their knees. All students will wear shirts with collars. The shirts can have long sleeves or short sleeves. Shirts must be white, black or the school color, royal blue. Shirts may not have images on them. The school will sell some shirts. These shirts will be black and royal blue shirts and sweatshirts with the school logo on the chest.

Students can buy their uniform clothing at any store. The clothing must meet the requirements.

Benefits of Uniforms

Principal West believes there are many good things for students about uniforms. “Student clothing is distracting. The bright colors and designs can be distracting for some students. Students often worry about what to wear each day. I’ve heard parents tell me many times that it takes hours for their students to get ready for school in the morning. They say that the students are too worried about how they look. Students worry about how they compare to everyone else at school. Having uniforms makes students more equal. It takes away the pressure to have expensive or trendy clothes.”



Maria Lopez, mother of a 7th grader, agrees. “Uniforms are a great idea. It will make it so much easier for my daughter to get dressed in the morning. The uniforms will probably save us money too. We won’t have to buy so many clothes.”

There is research about student uniforms. It says that students who attend schools where uniforms are required do better on tests. “Students spend time thinking about what they wear. They get distracted by the clothing the other students are wearing. In uniforms, they are better able to pay attention in class. They learn more,” explains Principal West.

Student Reaction

“I don’t want to wear a uniform!” says 7th grader Ana Lopez. “This isn’t fair! I should be able to wear what I want!”

Most of Ana’s friends agreed. Student body president Madison Rodriguez agreed. “It makes me angry,” Madison said. “The principal and

teachers didn't ask us what we thought. They just made a decision. We're the ones that have to wear them. We should get to have some say in what they look like."

"We need to have some way to express ourselves," 7th grader Ali Jones added. "I don't want to have to look like everyone else."

Principal West also thought that it was important to give the students some choices. "We're not requiring them to wear a certain color of shoes. So the students are free to wear shoes that they like. But the shoes must fit within the rules we already have." The current dress code for shoes states that students can wear any shoes that have heels less than two inches high.

Not all of the students are mad about having to wear uniforms. "It's not that bad," said 6th grader Jake Seely. "At least it will be easy to get dressed in the mornings."

Long Term Plans

Principal West said that uniforms should bring good changes to the school. They should help students pay attention in class. They should help raise test scores. Uniforms should help students get along better socially. The school district may decide to require uniforms at the high school and elementary schools also. Principal West said, "Requiring uniforms will bring about a lot of good and much needed change."

There is more research about uniforms. It was that schools with uniforms have less bullying. They have less violent behavior than other schools. Schools with uniforms had higher

attendance rates. Fewer students dropped out of school.

Uniforms will be required starting the first day of school this coming fall. A parent can choose to send the student to a school without uniforms. "I don't expect many parents to make this choice," Principal West added.

Next year, a student may come to school not wearing the uniform. The student will have two choices. The student can be sent home to change. He or she will be marked with an unexcused tardy or absence for any class time they miss. A student may choose clothes from the school office. "We'll keep some uniform clothing here," said Principal West. "A student can borrow appropriate clothing. They can buy a uniform directly from us. We want to make this easy for everyone."

In the past ten years, there have been several law suits in the United States. These lawsuits were filed by students who believe that the school's dress codes are against with their rights. So far, in every case, the schools have won.

Principal West said, "Uniforms are here to stay."