

The Little
Voice In
The Big
Crowd ...

ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL

ROGUE NEWS



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Dress Code
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AHS Coeds: Thow Off Your Dresses

EDITORIAL COMMENT CONCERNING THE DRESS CODE

By Ken Conger

Here we are on the brink of another vital issue, this time involving the Ashland High dress code. After many petitions, several discussions, numerous student council activities, a few heated arguments, and a martyr for the cause, it seems we still fall considerably short of our goal. Feeling it is the proper time to take action, I am taking this opportunity to speak out in favor of the proposed dress code revision for four main reasons:

1) A dress code must reflect the current styles and be flexible enough to change with them.

2) The proposed changes are well reasoned and not actually radical or especially new.

3) The dress code relieves the administration of having to enforce an unrealistic dress code, yet retains enough faculty control.

4) If accepted, the new dress code would be unlikely to cause any radical changes in student grooming.

The first and main reason for wanting a code change is based on the idea that any workable dress code must realistically portray the style and mode of the times. The present dress code does not. It leaves little or no leeway for many styles of dress now popular and already accepted in many schools across the country. It is not a flexible guideline that can be easily modified, but a list of vague rules left over from the "bobby sox era" to be translated however, the administration sees fit at the time. On the other hand, the proposed code includes more modern modes of dress and provides the necessary flexibility by setting up a revisions board to review any future changes. Such a flexible and timely dress code is vitally needed if we are to have a dress code at all.

The proposed changes offer a new and more realistic mode of determining grooming habits, yet these changes are not especially new and are far from radical in scope. Similar dress codes have been adopted in many high schools, two of which are in this very Rogue Valley. We students have been taught all our lives to think for ourselves and to stand up for what we believe. Sticking to these democratic ideals, we have thought out the dress code problem and come up with some valid and substantial arguments, but how much real effect we have on administrative decisions remains to be tested.

Essentially, the only major change taking place is a shift of authority — putting dress decisions into the hands of the student and his parents where it belongs, rather than burdening the administration with busy work keeping tabs on hair and skirt lengths. At the same time, the code retains sufficient faculty control in questionable cases. If safety or health standards are in clear violation, or if the student's appearance causes a disturbance, the faculty can take the proper action. In my humble opinion, these should be the only times the faculty or administration should have to worry about student dress. I'm sure the administrators have much better things to do than constantly scan headlines and sideburns for code offenders. (Even though it seems that's all they ever do.) By rights, they should be freed of this burden to concentrate on more academic and scholarly pursuits in the interest of better education.

Finally, if the new dress code were established, radical changes in student dressing habits would not be likely. A popular misconception among adults is that teenagers tend to dress only in what looks funky or weird if given the chance to do so. Contrary to this popular belief, most students strive to wear what looks good on them, be it slacks or shirts, crewcut or beard. An excellent example can be seen in other Jackson county schools which adopted revised dress codes earlier this year. The committee from AHS that was sent to study the Medford High campus for dress habits report that they saw very few who wore odd or repulsive styles. The same report came from a student study trip to Phoenix High. There hasn't been any evidence showing

that the schools' new dress codes have caused a decline in academic areas or a rise in abnormal teenage complexes, which should be reassuring to grade-worriers.

Many adults ask why we want to change the dress code, yet the reasons should be obvious. Look around you — all but one of the shots on this page were strictly candid, taken at normal vision angles. (Guess which one wasn't!) There are few things more revolting to me than baggy, running nylons, exposed garters, and occasional bulging girdle, and nameless lacy underthings glaring at me everywhere I look. Don't look, you say, but how am I to get up the stairs?

Unlike skirts and modesty, men's hair styles and beards have many reasons to be grown, just pick the one you like. My question is: What bearing does hair style or beard length have on character or academic standing? Many famous men in history have grown long hair and beards without apparent harm to their creative capacities. (refer to next page) I personally would like to grow a beard for any of the following reasons: 1) to prove I can, 2) to show my prowess (choke!) 3) to hide my zits, 4) to hide behind for security, or 5) to force Gillette into bankruptcy. Any one of these could spur me on, but the fact remains that it should be my own choice.

Getting back to the basics, the many arguments boil down to a few major reasons why we want to change the code. The plan has had much forethought and preparation work, and has already been successful in several schools. The proposed changes are more realistic and more flexible. They also stress individual discretion and initiative, and spurs voluntary grooming habits.

We students should unite in our efforts to show the administration and this community that we are responsible people dedicated toward a common goal, to make the dress code more fair and just for all involved. We all have to sit down together and reason the problem out in a rational manner. Sooner or later we will have to come to the stark realization that crewcuts and high-button shoes are but relics of a passing generation, destined for constructive change.

Sometimes Pants



... Look Nicer Than Dresses

