School Uniforms Essay, Research Paper

School Uniforms

Schools are a safe-heaven for students to learn and for teachers to educate. Many people claim that schools are becoming increasingly unsafe and that students are not focusing on what the school system is trying to accomplish. Those contending this put forth dress codes as a solution for these problems and argue to their effectiveness. However strong these arguments may seem, the novelty and the charm of them quickly fades, as the truth of the effects of school uniforms are realized. The introduction of school uniforms would cause for public humiliation and they are a useless attempt at trying to solve school problems, while placing students in a cookie-cutter mold striving to prevent segregation.

A child could easily be ridiculed in front of his class because of a violation of the dress code. An example of this is a story I once read of a child whose teacher, referring to his shoes, announced, “We don’t need grubs in this school.” That morning, his mother suggested he wear his sneakers because his school shoes were still wet from the previous day’s rain. This is just one example out of many that could occur on a regular day’s basis. Any out of place or missing piece of clothing could lead to similar results. An untucked shirt or a flared shirt collar would be considered violations of the rules and would lead to further unnecessary humiliation due to the use of uniforms.

Having experienced two cultures, one where school uniforms are expansively used and the other were their use is limited mainly to Catholic schools, I can confidently opinionate that school uniforms are educationally counterproductive. There is no true evidence supporting their use or proving their benefits. The control of children’s dress is evidence of the laws of the middle ages that seem to still influence the laws of present times. Today, anyone attempting to promote a return to that standard for adults would be considered crazy. They establish a constant reminder and a visible symbol recognizable to everyone of the student’s inferior status. They are an excuse for incompetent teachers to assert their authority and to inflict punishments. Schools that require uniforms typically waste much valuable time on inspections and imposition of punishments for dress-code violations. A student’s personal growth and self-expression are severely limited by the implementation of school uniforms.

Teenagers currently distinguish themselves in a variety of ways. In high schools, such as Mackenzie, students segregate themselves according to anything from musical preference to religious observance. The natural need to be in a group is the driving force behind the behaviour of segregating. Human kind has gathered into groups since the dawning of time. Something such as uniforms cannot stop this natural behaviour, as other ways of differentiation will certainly materialize. Objects such as jewelry, hair dyes and tattoos will start differentiating the students. Eventually, the need will arise to control and monitor things such as these. Control knows no boundaries and students will continue to find ways to evade the rules.

Should our society be heading towards a melting pot where all persons are fabricated alike? School uniforms create schools that have little character and in which all the students are formed from the same idealistic properties. The charm of uniforms quickly vapourize once there is a realization that students should not be clumped into one group, but should be allowed to show their individuality and personality. The use of school uniforms and control on student’s tries bringing them all onto the same plateau, but in many ways overstep the boundaries of acceptability. Where does the fine line get drawn concerning what may or may not be controlled?