

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

It has come to the attention of the publications staff that a large portion of the student body is displeased with the St. Albert dress code. Many stated in a Google poll conducted by The Accipiter that they find the uniforms outdated and the rules unfair or unfairly enforced. Because of this ongoing issue, the St. Albert journalism department decided to thoroughly analyze the school's dress code. Inside this edition there will be multiple articles going into depth over certain aspects of the uniform. Each article will provide comments from both the administration and the student body to get different points of view. The publications staff has also researched the dress codes of several other schools, but specifically Dowling of West Des Moines, Kuemper of Carroll, and Skutt from Omaha. The information found on these schools was put into a spreadsheet for the SA student body to compare.

While a majority of this edition is covering the dress code, I thought it was also important to recognize our cross-country team and Emma Gardner for making it to state. In this edition there will also be a couple winter sport previews to get you excited for the upcoming season. Both basketball teams seem to be looking good and the wrestling team seems to have a huge increase in numbers, which excites me for an all-around great winter sports season.

I believe it's important for you, the readers, to understand that the publication staff is student-run, and because of that the students like to write about what interests them the most. The goal of this Accipiter is not to bash the administration or complain. The goal of this edition is to get students involved in an issue that they care about and to write and investigate it. Whether this Accipiter causes change or not, the student body will be better informed and have been taught that we do have a voice.

Sincerely,

Drew Gronstal

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# Poll: Dress Code Too Restrictive

By Maggie King  
Staff Writer

It might not come as a surprise that quite a few St. Albert High School students have ideas for changing what they can wear to school.

A Google poll was sent to St. Albert's high school students in early November to gather opinions about the dress code. About 52 percent, or 84 students, responded.

Of those who participated, 63 students said they think the uniform dress code is too strict, while another 21 said it is just right.

Same with the grub day dress code. Sixty-nine students said they think the grub day rules are too strict, while 15 think it's just right.

When it came to suggestions about what they would change, the ideas that received 50 percent or more support from among the 84 students were the ability to wear:

- Other jackets during school (such as North Face or Columbia)
- Different colored/patterned sweaters
- Pants that have outside back pockets
- Any shoe style, including boots (with pants tucked inside the boot).

In addition, 48 students, or 57 percent, said boys should be allowed to grow their hair to touch the shirt collar.

Under the St. Albert dress code, hair length is not addressed. The code says students cannot have "extreme hair" and it should not cover the eyes. However, administration can require a hair cut if it is not well-groomed or causes a disruption.

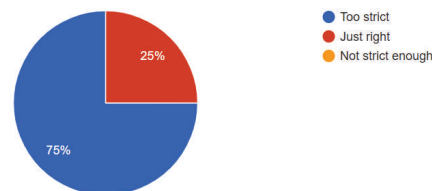
For grub days, the majority of the students polled supported wearing leggings or yoga pants, ripped jeans and athletic shorts that don't go to the knee.

According to the dress code rules in the Student/Parent Handbook & Code of Conduct on the St. Albert website, girls already have a shorter shorts option. The rules state: "Bermuda shorts (whose length falls within the range of the fingertips when the student is standing with their arms resting at their sides) may be worn from the beginning of the school year through October and during the months of April and May."

Despite changes some students would like

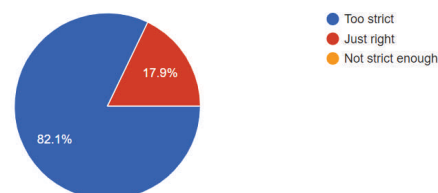
What do you think about the uniform dress code?

84 responses



What do you think about the grub day dress code?

84 responses



to see, other students think the dress code is just fine. According to the poll, 12 people felt the rules for girls don't need any changes, while eight liked the boys' rules.

When it comes to following the rules, 12 people felt students should "suck it up" and stop complaining. But 60 students disagreed with this advice. Another 12 students were neutral or just didn't care.

When it comes to enforcement, 63 of the students, or 75 percent, said Principal David Schweitzer and Vice Principal Ken Schreiber are strict.

However, in the comment section of the survey, more than a dozen students mentioned that enforcement is inconsistent throughout the school.

"Some people get away with stuff that others don't so if it's going to be strict, then enforce it for everyone."

"Some teachers just go straight to a demerit when you're out of dress code. You should be able to get a warning."

"There seems to only be problems with what the girls wear on grub days, so I feel like they're really only enforcing the girls grub day dress code."

But another student mentioned, "I think a lot of people don't realize how relaxed it is other than grub days."

# Dress Code Enforcement Proves Challenging

By Cody Athay  
Staff Writer

Ken Schreiber routinely stands in the St. Albert lobby as students arrive each morning.

The vice principal's task is two-fold: to greet students at the start of the day and to make sure they are following rules, including the dress code.

"Good morning."

"Hey, tuck in that shirt."

"Do you have a tie?"

Walk into any high school classroom and, on most days, students' clothes will look nearly the same as every other student of their gender. That is by design as Catholic schools are known for their uniforms.

To quote the SA Handbook, "Saint Albert Catholic Schools believe that performance in school is enhanced by setting high standards for personal appearance that reflect pride in one's self and in the school system. The uniform dress code is established to promote unity, equity, self-discipline, and respect."

"When everyone wears the same style of clothing, everyone is equal," said STEM director Jeremy Hulshizer.

"I think the purpose of the dress code is that financially everyone is on the same playing field," he said.

Some students, however, think the dress code is too strict or unfairly enforced.

For example, senior Reed Miller had purchased a



**Senior Reed Miller was told these shoes violated the dress code.**

new pair of shoes for school that were light brown with white soles.

"But when I got to school I was told by a staff member that they were not dress code," he said. "I was so angry."

In another instance, senior Maggie Wettengel said she was reprimanded by a teacher on a grub day because of the length of her shorts, although other girls were wearing similar clothing.

"I think the regular dress code is fine," she said. "But the grub day is kind of sketchy."

Science teacher Devin Yeoman said applying the dress code to what students are wearing in the halls on any given day is "kind of subjective."

When it comes to shirts, boys are required to wear white or blue, with middle school students restricted to light blue.

"For some people, it might be a navy blue shirt or a bright blue shirt," Yeoman said. "How do I police dress code and teach?"

Principal David Schweitzer said he shouldn't have to.

"The purpose of the uniform is not to run around to see if

everyone is following the rules. ... The dress code helps establish guidelines for a fitting environment to have school," he said, adding, "I don't want teachers spending an inordinate amount of time on that."

Schreiber said dress code violations are third on the list of largest infractions. More students are reprimanded for being tardy. And still more for not being prepared for class, although those students are mostly from the middle school.

"I think I speak to students about dress code three or four times a week," Schreiber said. "Is it demerit related? No, not necessarily."

Most students follow the rules, Schweitzer said. Other students wear clothing that's "on the edge of the dress code." Still others are defying rules because they want to prove a point.

"Some young people don't like to have guidelines on their behavior," he said.

While teachers and administrators try to enforce the dress code rules fairly, Schweitzer said it's just like speeding down the interstate – not everyone gets caught. But that doesn't mean students should try to openly violate the dress code.

"If you are speeding," he said, "don't be surprised if you see lights."

# Appropriate Length in Shorts is Fingertip

**By Savannah Campbell**  
*Staff Writer*

Last April, Athena Arculeo was dressed in her soccer shorts for a grub day when she was stopped by a St. Albert faculty member. She was asked if her shorts were the correct length. Arculeo replied, “They’re to my fingertips.” But the teacher told her that they needed to be knee-length.

Who was right?

The teacher was enforcing a rule that has been a part of St. Albert’s dress code for many years. And it is a rule published in flyers in the office.

But that part of the dress code has been modified. The correct wording concerning shorts is in the dress code in the Student/Parent Handbook & Code of Conduct on the St. Albert website, according to principal David Schweitzer. Under the guidelines for out-of-uniform days, it says “Bermuda shorts (whose length falls within the range of the fingertips when the student is standing with their arms resting at their sides) may be worn from the beginning of the school year through October and during the months of April and May.”

By definition, Bermuda shorts are “casual, knee-length shorts.” But even big retailers are having a hard time defining the length of Bermuda shorts. A sampling of popular retail websites – Old Navy, JCPenney and American Eagle – show Bermuda shorts with leg lengths stretching from just above the knee to mid-thigh.

St. Albert girls want to wear shorts in compliance with the dress code. However, confusion over the proper length of shorts has some students hesitant about what to wear be-



**Left, senior Athena Arculeo displays the shorts that were considered inappropriate when she wore them to school. Right, sophomores Sam Rallis and Isaac Sherrill said no one stopped them about the length of their shorts, although they are not knee-length. Staff photos.**



cause they don’t want to get into trouble or worse, be sent home to change.

“Girls don’t want to wear boy shorts,” said senior Trinity Marlow.

Even so, boys’ shorts are beginning to get shorter. The style of male athletic wear has transitioned from the baggy shorts that fall below the knee to tighter-fitting shorts that are about mid-thigh. In October, two sophomore boys wore such shorts to school during a grub day. Both said no one approached them concerning the length of their shorts.

According to St. Albert’s dress code, out-of-uniform shorts – for girls and

boys – are acceptable if they are finger-tipped length.

Girls also can wear dressy Bermuda shorts to school on Fridays with a green polo shirt. The dress code is expanded on Fridays to include St. Albert embroidered green polo shirts and cargo pants, corduroy pants (khaki, navy, black, or gray), or dress Bermuda shorts (khaki or navy). Since the dress code specifies “students” that means both boys and girls can wear the dress Bermuda shorts on Fridays from the beginning of the school year until the last day of October and from April 1 until the end of the school year.

# Sometimes Dress Shoes

**Reed Miller**  
*Staff Writer*

When it comes to uniform restrictions on the types of shoes Catholics students are allowed to wear, it seems St. Albert students are a few steps behind.

Accipiter staff writers examined the dress codes of three other Catholic high schools – Dowling in West Des Moines, Carroll Kuemper and Omaha Skutt – and compared them to St. Albert. In the shoe department, St. Albert comes off as the strictest school.

The St. Albert dress code for boys and girls specify “dress shoes” must be worn. They are to be “predominantly black or brown with complimentary-colored laces, trim and soles.” It goes on to say they must have closed toe but can have an open back, such as the style of Birkenstocks. Then it goes on to specify what cannot be worn: bowling shoes, Moccasins, slippers, shoes with fur or plaid lining that look like slippers, tennis or canvas-type shoes.

By comparison, Dowling students can wear dress or tennis shoes, and the only restriction is they can’t wear open-toed shoes. Kuemper can wear tennis shoes, dress shoes and boots. Skutt’s dress code simply states shoes “must be worn”.

“I think shoes rules are the most needless rules to have,” said senior Landry Cormier. “People don’t wear

***“Dress shoes should be predominantly black or brown with complimentary colored laces, trim and soles.”***

**- SA Dress Code**

neon basketball shoes and they don’t wear heels. People just wear neutral shoes, and handing out demerits for having shoes that aren’t neutral enough is ridiculous.”

Vice Principal Ken Schreiber said demerits are not handed out for simple dress-code violations. His procedure is to talk to the student about what they are wearing, tell them why it violates school policy and then work to resolve the issue. Sometimes it takes time. A family might not have the ability or the money right away to buy different shoes, and that is okay.

For example, a student recently ripped his school shoes and his parents promised to buy new ones on the weekend, Schreiber said. So the student was allowed to wear athletic shoes all week.

On the other hand, some students can take care of the dress code violation right away by walking to their lockers, where they keep multiple pairs of shoes and sweaters, he said.

It is only after someone is warned and continues to violate dress code that they are given a demerit, he said.

Sophomore Sam Wilber said rules governing shoes could be broader because there are other styles of dress shoes besides brown and black.

“If a person bought a nice pair of dress shoes for school,” he said, “the color should be allowed no matter what it is.”

Principal David Schweitzer said the dress code is reasonable and is followed by the majority of students.

“We are constantly asked to make a judgment about something that most people see as reasonable,” Schweitzer said.

Schreiber agrees, noting that there are considerations to be made with many cases.

“We try to be fair and consistent with the dress code,” he said.

There are several reasons why a dress code can cause conflict.

First, money. Students wear down shoes every year. They have to buy new ones. If they purchase shoes that they think are acceptable and then are told they are not, that is costly. The rules can be interpreted in several ways. For example, what are “complimentary-colored soles”?

Schreiber and Schweitzer said the answer is simple – just ask. Before buying shoes, take a picture and email it to Schreiber or Schweitzer. Both men said this is done all the time.

Administrators are also sensitive to money issues.



# Are Hard to Define

Schweitzer said parents will save up all summer to buy school clothing and supplies for students in the fall. These not only include school shoes but all types of shoes for football, volleyball, basketball and other sports. This is also one reason why the school does not crack down on students who wear shoes that are worn out.

Second, enforcement. Teachers – like students - interpret the dress code differently, so enforcement is sometimes inconsistent. Some teachers call out students for dress code violations, while other teachers don't bother.

"Some teachers shouldn't be strict for certain people and not others," Wilber said. "If they're gonna be strict, just be strict about it. If they're gonna be more loose about it, then be loose with everyone."

Schweitzer said teachers

and staff have every right to use their own judgment in enforcing the dress code.

"If something stands outside the norm, I support that," he said.

Still, it is sometimes difficult to determine what is a "dress" shoe.

Schweitzer asks, "Would you wear those shoes in P.E.?" If so, they are not dress shoes.

Third, convenience. The state requires everyone to be physically active, either by playing a sport or taking a P.E. course. According to James Cairney, who teaches the majority of the physical education classes, about one student in every class does not have tennis shoes with them.

"I think it would be beneficial to have tennis shoes in the dress code because they are also

better for foot support," Cairney said.

For students, the type of footwear worn at school should not be this difficult to figure out.

"It's not that big of a problem," said junior Richard Hu. "The teachers should focus more on academics instead of something small like shoes."

Schweitzer said students wearing the wrong shoes or a sweater of an unacceptable color does not distract from learning. But dressing according to code is a lesson in itself. Students should dress as if they have a job and must meet their boss's professional expectations.

"They are going to work as a student," he said.

Students are being taught to dress to make a good impression, he said.

"Dress to respect yourself."

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# Staying Warm or Narrow Options for Outerwear Leaves



From left: Seniors Maggie Wettengel and Gracie Springman are dressed in acceptable fleece jacket and sweatshirt. At right is a 1/4 zip sold by the SA Spirit Store, but is it acceptable? Photos by Jared Gast and Maddie Skinner

**By Jared Gast**  
*Staff Writer*

During the chill of fall and early spring, and the cold of winter, St. Albert students often find themselves wanting to wear a little more clothing to keep warm.

The school dress code, however, leaves some people feeling like their options are a little limited.

Sixty-eight percent of the 84 St. Albert students who filled out a Google survey about the dress code expressed a desire for more outerwear options.

“We should be able to wear our jackets and things we get from sports whenever we want and wear all sweaters no matter the color,” said junior Aiden Antisdell.

Principal David Schweitzer said the dress code

was intended to make it easier to shop for clothes.

“I think they were looking for a way long ago, to find something that would be uniform and at the same time, reasonable and that they could enforce,” he said. “And so it tended then to start with the jackets from Dennis Uniform.”

He acknowledged that team-specific jackets are common, but that exclusivity is the reason they cannot be worn.

“It is a challenge because activities have uniform jackets,” he said. “In the end the decision was wear the jacket everyone has access to.”

Some students want to see restrictions loosened on apparel items that prominently feature the brand’s logo somewhere on them.

“It shouldn’t matter if something has a brand logo on

it or not,” said sophomore Grace Garrigan. “It should still be allowed.”

Schweitzer said that once again a lack of consistent accessibility is the issue.

“I think if we go back to why the dress code was put in, it was so that your dress was not a major opportunity to distinguish yourself from your peers,” he said. “If you can buy an acceptable \$160 Under Armour jacket that not everyone can, then those who can’t should not feel like they cannot dress to the norm, which is why I believe the rule was put in place.”

Many people believe that lighter-weight winter jackets or hoodies should be allowed as well.

“I want to be comfy all day in a sweatshirt or a Columbia jacket or something like

# Accessorizing?

## Students Unsure of What is Acceptable

that,” said junior Keely Socha.

Schweitzer said that events in the outside world have had a trickle-down effect on dress code as well.

“Some of the school violence and things have become sadly commonplace, and schools needed to find ways to ensure that outsiders were not allowed in the school, and that everyone was visible at all times,” he said. “As a result, hoodies and jackets were banned from public schools and that had an effect on tightening up dress code here as well.”

Seventy-five percent of 84 respondents to the dress code poll conducted by The Accipiter believe that staff is too strict with dress code. On the other hand, Schweitzer believes students have a misperception that the administration makes dress code violations a much bigger deal than it really is.

“During the course of a school day, I’m just trying to remember everyone’s name and say hello and keep the peace,” he said. “When I see a purple sweater it does not come to my mind that it is a dress code violation. I just want to see kids that look like they are here to go to school and take it seriously.”

***“Saint Albert Uniform Logo jacket is available at Dennis Uniform in solid black or solid forest green. Navy Saint Albert Uniform Logo jackets which have been previously purchased may be worn, however Dennis Uniform has been directed to cease selling after July 2015.”***

**-SA dress code**

***“Sweaters should be a solid color . . . hunter green, black, gray, navy, or red. Cardigan, crew neck, vneck, or pullover sweaters are acceptable. Hooded sweaters of any kind do not meet dress code. Sweaters should be worn over a blouse, dress shirt, polo, turtleneck, or mock turtleneck or stored in student lockers. Sweaters are not allowed to be worn around the waist.”***

**-SA dress code**

***“Hoodless crewneck sweatshirts in dark green with Saint Albert embroidery are approved for dress code, provided that the sweatshirt is worn over a blouse, dress shirt, polo, turtleneck, or mock turtleneck. Sweatshirts are not allowed to be worn around the waist.”***

**-SA dress code**



	St. Albert
<b>Girls shirt</b>	White or blue oxford-style dress shirts, long- or short-sleeve, tucked in & buttoned up
<b>Girls pants</b>	Solid color dress pants/slacks. Black, khaki or navy. No "jean look" outside pockets.
<b>Girls skirt/skort</b>	Fingertip length, carden-plaid skorts. No skirts sold
<b>Shorts</b>	Dress Bermuda shorts on Fridays until Oct. 31 and after April 1
<b>Girls shoes</b>	Dress shoes, black or brown with complimentary-colored soles, closed toe but may have open back. No slippers, bowling shoes or tennis shoes. Boots worn under slacks.
<b>Girls sweater</b>	Solid color: hunter green, black, gray, navy or red.
<b>Tights</b>	Solid color tights/hosiery under skort, skirt or slacks.
<b>Boys shirt</b>	Solid color: white or blue, long- or short-sleeve, collared and oxford-style
<b>Boys pants</b>	Solid color dress pants/slacks. Black, khaki or navy
<b>Boys sweater</b>	Solid color: hunter green, black, gray, navy or red.
<b>Boys shoes</b>	Dress shoes, black or brown with complimentary-colored soles. No slippers, canvas-type or athletic shoes.
<b>Ties</b>	Must be worn; "business dress"
<b>Hair</b>	No "extreme hair." Should not cover eyes. Administration can require a hair cut if not well-groomed or poses a disruption
<b>Belts</b>	If pants have belt loops, black, brown or navy.
<b>Sweatshirts</b>	Hoodless crewneck, dark green with SA embroidery. Worn over blouse, dress shirt, turtleneck or mock turtleneck.
<b>Fleece jackets</b>	Logo fleece jackets in black or green.
<b>Undershirts</b>	White with no writing
<b>Outerwear</b>	None allowed, no sunglasses
<b>Grub day clothing</b>	No cuts, tears, rips or holes
<b>Grub day shoes</b>	Any shoes
<b>Grub day shorts</b>	Fingertip length
<b>Grub day pants</b>	No leggings or tight fitting pants, flannel or pajama pants
<b>Grub day shirts</b>	No bare midriff, tank tops, advertising immoral messages, low necklines
<b>Spirit day uniform</b>	Green polo w/logo, black, khaki, navy, cargo or corduroy pants
<b>PE uniform</b>	Shorts, appropriate shirt

	Dowling
	Short- or long-sleeve polo with school crest. Maroon, black, white and grey
	Black, khaki, navy or grey cotton ankle-length. Must have pockets, belt loops and a zipper.
	N/A
	N/A
	Dress or tennis shoes, solid color with a back strap, no open-toed shoes
	Cardigan with school crest, black or maroon
	N/A
	Short- or long-sleeve polo with school crest. Maroon, black, white and grey
	Black, khaki, navy or grey cotton ankle-length. Must have pockets, belt loops and a zipper.
	Cardigan with school crest, black or maroon
	Dress or tennis shoes, solid color with a back strap, no open-toed shoes
	N/A
	Must be conventional cut. Boys above the collar
	N/A
	Uniform fleece: girls full zip; guys quarter zip. School crest
	N/A
	N/A
	N/A
	no grub days
	N/A
	N/A
	N/A
	N/A
	N/A
	School PE t-shirt and PE shorts

	Kuemper
	Polo-style, red or white
	Solid black, khaki or navy dress pants, belt
	Black, khaki or navy polyester-blend skirts (April 15 - Oct 15), 2 inches above knee.
	Shorts, capris (April 15 - Oct 15)
	Dress or tennis shoes. Boots under pant legs
	Red or dark grey. Kuemper logo on left chest.
	N/A
	Polo style, red or white
	Black, Khaki or navy. Must have a belt.
	Red or grey. Kuemper logo on left chest
	Dress or tennis shoes. Boots under pant legs
	N/A
	Conventional color/cut. Trimmed above eyebrows, around ears and above collar.
	Grades 6-12
	Red or dark grey. Kuemper logo on left chest.
	Red or dark grey. Kuemper logo on left chest.
	Plain white
	No hats, scarves or bandanas
	No holes, especially exposing skin
	Any
	Shorts do not reach mid thigh
	No leggings, yoga pants
	No low cut/very snug fitting
	"Kuemper shirt days"
	N/A

	Skutt
	White or black polo with logo, tucked in
	Solid black, khaki, or navy dress pants, with belt loops, straight cut with pockets, ankle-length; no cargo pants.
	4 inches above the knee, "Skutt-approved"
	April-October, solid black, khaki, or gray, 4 inches above knee with belt loops. No cargo shorts
	Must be worn
	Solid black, gray, green, burgundy with polo underneath, regular or cardigan
	Have a foot and be solid black, gray, green or burgundy
	White or black polo with logo, tucked in
	Solid black, khaki, or navy dress pants, with belt loops, straight cut with pockets, ankle-length; no cargo pants.
	Solid black, gray, green, burgundy with polo underneath, regular or cardigan
	Must be worn
	N/A
	Natural color and reasonable length and style
	Worn with pants and shorts at all times
	With logo, gray or black with polo underneath
	With logo, gray, white, or black with polo underneath
	White with no writing
	No coats, jackets, or scarves, no sunglasses, hats, or jackets
	"In accordance with values taught, staff will be the judge of the acceptability of clothing."
	Must be worn with socks
	May be worn during "shorts season" and not excessively short, "as determined by SCHS staff."
	No torn, ripped, fringed, cut off, excessively worn, excessively tight, or mutilated clothing
	No tank tops, bare midriff, cropped
	Any skutt shirt with appropriate pants
	N/A

# How the SA Dress Code Stacks Up to Other Schools

By Jackie Sindelar, Isabel Pershing and Maggie King  
Staff Writers

As a way to put St. Albert's dress code in perspective, The Accipiter staff examined the dress codes for three other Catholic schools. One was the other high school in the Des Moines Diocese, Dowling of West Des Moines. Another was Skutt High School in the Omaha Diocese. And the third was Carroll Kuemper, part of the Sioux City Diocese. Information was obtained from the schools' online dress code and, in some instances, information from students at those schools.

When comparing the dress codes, we noticed that some of St. Albert's requirements are not as restrictive as the other schools. One example is the number of different sweater and sweatshirt options. St. Albert has five color options and accepts most styles of sweaters; Dowling and Kuemper require a specific school sweater with logo. St. Albert also allows crewneck sweatshirts. Some other schools don't.

Other observations worth pointing out include:

- Gray sweatshirts, quarter zips and black skorts are now acceptable at St. Albert but haven't been added yet to the online dress code rules.
- SA high school girls can continue to wear their middle school skirts/skort. They don't have to buy a high school skirt/skort their freshman year.
- SA boys can grow their hair out as long as it looks clean, neat and not "extreme." Dowling and Kuemper require cuts above the collar.
- St. Albert shorts must be fingertip length or longer. Skutt is 4 inches above the knee and shorts need belt loops (no cargo shorts).
- The polo shirts worn on Friday "spirit days" at St. Albert are part of the everyday uniform for most other schools. And their "spirit days" requirements are any other style of school shirt.
- Other schools have the option of wearing either dress shoes or athletic shoes.
- Leggings or tight fitting pants and "short shorts" are not allowed at St. Albert or elsewhere.

## Dowling

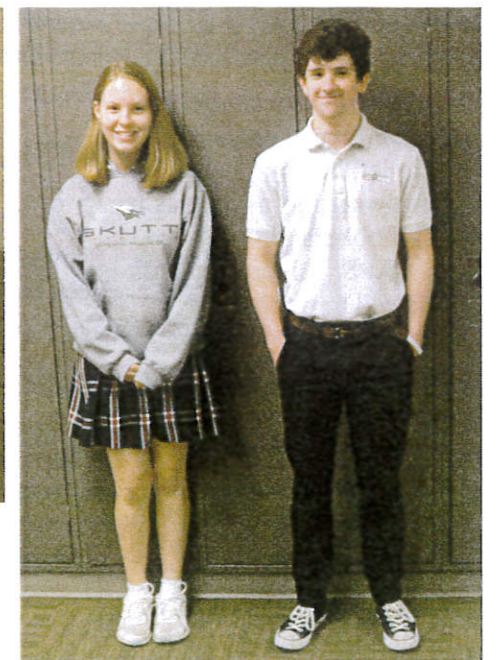


## Kuemper



These are uniform examples from Dowling, Kuemper and Skutt high schools. (Dowling nametags are not required; these students were serving as ambassadors that day.) We wish to thank the journalism departments at these schools for providing the photographs.

## Skutt





St. Albert	
Girls shirt	White or blue oxford-style dress shirts, long- or short-sleeve, tucked in & buttoned up
Girls pants	Solid color dress pants/slacks. Black, khaki or navy. No "jean look" outside pockets.
Girls skirt/skort	Fingertip length, carden-plaid skorts. No skirts sold
Shorts	Dress Bermuda shorts on Fridays until Oct. 31 and after April 1
Girls shoes	Dress shoes, black or brown with complimentary-colored soles, closed toe but may have open back. No slippers, bowling shoes or tennis shoes. Boots worn under slacks.
Girls sweater	Solid color: hunter green, black, gray, navy or red.
Tights	Solid color tights/hosiery under skort, skirt or slacks.
Boys shirt	Solid color: white or blue, long- or short-sleeve, collared and oxford-style
Boys pants	Solid color dress pants/slacks. Black, khaki or navy
Boys sweater	Solid color: hunter green, black, gray, navy or red.
Boys shoes	Dress shoes, black or brown with complimentary-colored soles. No slippers, canvas-type or athletic shoes.
Ties	Must be worn; "business dress"
Hair	No "extreme hair." Should not cover eyes. Administration can require a hair cut if not well-groomed or poses a disruption
Belts	If pants have belt loops, black, brown or navy.
Sweatshirts	Hoodless crewneck, dark green with SA embroidery. Worn over blouse, dress shirt, turtleneck or mock turtleneck.
Fleece jackets	Logo fleece jackets in black or green.
Undershirts	White with no writing
Outerwear	None allowed, no sunglasses
Grub day clothing	No cuts, tears, rips or holes
Grub day shoes	Any shoes
Grub day shorts	Fingertip length
Grub day pants	No leggings or tight fitting pants, flannel or pajama pants
Grub day shirts	No bare midriff, tank tops, advertising immoral messages, low necklines
Spirit day uniform	Green polo w/logo, black, khaki, navy, cargo or corduroy pants
PE uniform	Shorts, appropriate shirt

Dowling	
	Short- or long-sleeve polo with school crest. Maroon, black, white and grey
	Black, khaki, navy or grey cotton ankle-length. Must have pockets, belt loops and a zipper.
	N/A
	N/A
	Dress or tennis shoes, solid color with a back strap, no open-toed shoes
	Cardigan with school crest, black or maroon
	N/A
	Short- or long-sleeve polo with school crest. Maroon, black, white and grey
	Black, khaki, navy or grey cotton ankle-length. Must have pockets, belt loops and a zipper.
	Cardigan with school crest, black or maroon
	Dress or tennis shoes, solid color with a back strap, no open-toed shoes
	N/A
	Must be conventional cut. Boys above the collar
	N/A
	Uniform fleece: girls full zip; guys quarter zip. School crest
	N/A
	N/A
	N/A
	no grub days
	N/A
	N/A
	N/A
	N/A
	N/A
	School PE t-shirt and PE shorts

Kuemper	
	Polo-style, red or white
	Solid black, khaki or navy dress pants, belt
	Black, khaki or navy polyester-blend skirts (April 15 - Oct 15), 2 inches above knee.
	Shorts, capris (April 15 - Oct 15)
	Dress or tennis shoes. Boots under pant legs
	Red or dark grey. Kuemper logo on left chest.
	N/A
	Polo style, red or white
	Black, Khaki or navy. Must have a belt.
	Red or grey. Kuemper logo on left chest
	Dress or tennis shoes. Boots under pant legs
	N/A
	Conventional color/cut. Trimmed above eyebrows, around ears and above collar.
	Grades 6-12
	Red or dark grey. Kuemper logo on left chest.
	Red or dark grey. Kuemper logo on left chest.
	Plain white
	No hats, scarves or bandanas
	No holes, especially exposing skin
	Any
	Shorts do not reach mid thigh
	No leggings, yoga pants
	No low cut/very snug fitting
	"Kuemper shirt days"
	N/A

Skutt	
	White or black polo with logo, tucked in
	Solid black, khaki, or navy dress pants, with belt loops, straight cut with pockets, ankle-length; no cargo pants.
	4 inches above the knee, "Skutt-approved"
	April-October, solid black, khaki, or gray, 4 inches above knee with belt loops. No cargo shorts
	Must be worn
	Solid black, gray, green, burgundy with polo underneath, regular or cardigan
	Have a foot and be solid black, gray, green or burgundy
	White or black polo with logo, tucked in
	Solid black, khaki, or navy dress pants, with belt loops, straight cut with pockets, ankle-length; no cargo pants.
	Solid black, gray, green, burgundy with polo underneath, regular or cardigan
	Must be worn
	N/A
	Natural color and reasonable length and style
	Worn with pants and shorts at all times
	With logo, gray or black with polo underneath
	With logo, gray, white, or black with polo underneath
	White with no writing
	No coats, jackets, or scarves, no sunglasses, hats, or jackets
	"In accordance with values taught, staff will be the judge of the acceptability of clothing."
	Must be worn with socks
	May be worn during "shorts season" and not excessively short, "as determined by SCHS staff."
	No torn, ripped, fringed, cut off, excessively worn, excessively tight, or mutilated clothing
	No tank tops, bare midriff, cropped
	Any skutt shirt with appropriate pants
	N/A

# How the SA Dress Code Stacks Up to Other Schools

By Jackie Sindelar, Isabel Pershing and Maggie King  
Staff Writers

As a way to put St. Albert's dress code in perspective, The Accipiter staff examined the dress codes for three other Catholic schools. One was the other high school in the Des Moines Diocese, Dowling of West Des Moines. Another was Skutt High School in the Omaha Diocese. And the third was Carroll Kuemper, part of the Sioux City Diocese. Information was obtained from the schools' online dress code and, in some instances, information from students at those schools.

When comparing the dress codes, we noticed that some of St. Albert's requirements are not as restrictive as the other schools. One example is the number of different sweater and sweatshirt options. St. Albert has five color options and accepts most styles of sweaters; Dowling and Kuemper require a specific school sweater with logo. St. Albert also allows crewneck sweatshirts. Some other schools don't.

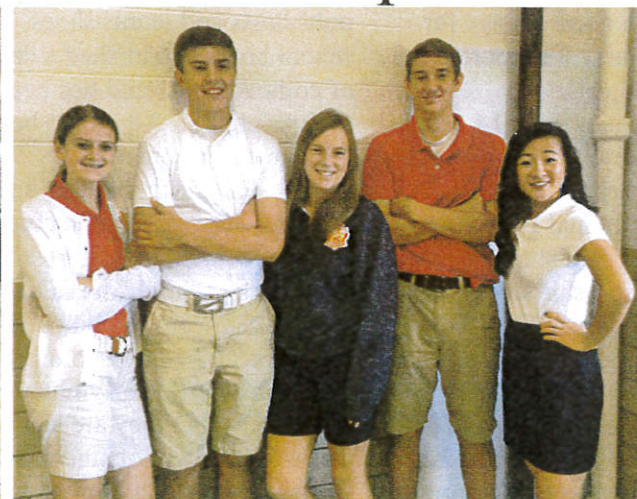
Other observations worth pointing out include:

- Gray sweatshirts, quarter zips and black skorts are now acceptable at St. Albert but haven't been added yet to the online dress code rules.
- SA high school girls can continue to wear their middle school skirts/skort. They don't have to buy a high school skirt/skort their freshman year.
- SA boys can grow their hair out as long as it looks clean, neat and not "extreme." Dowling and Kuemper require cuts above the collar.
- St. Albert shorts must be fingertip length or longer. Skutt is 4 inches above the knee and shorts need belt loops (no cargo shorts).
- The polo shirts worn on Friday "spirit days" at St. Albert are part of the everyday uniform for most other schools. And their "spirit days" requirements are any other style of school shirt.
- Other schools have the option of wearing either dress shoes or athletic shoes.
- Leggings or tight fitting pants and "short shorts" are not allowed at St. Albert or elsewhere.

## Dowling

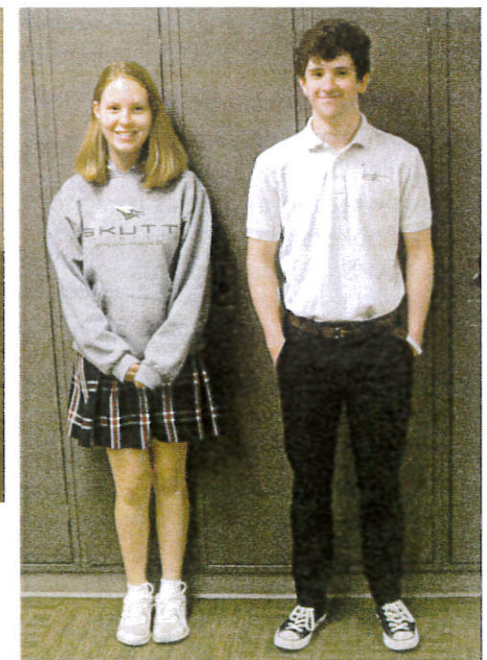


## Kuemper



These are uniform examples from Dowling, Kuemper and Skutt high schools. (Dowling nametags are not required; these students were serving as ambassadors that day.) We wish to thank the journalism departments at these schools for providing the photographs.

## Skutt





# Should SA Follow the Polo Trend?

By Emma Carlson  
Staff Writer

St. Albert is the only Catholic school in the Omaha metro area and Western Iowa to require girls to wear a button-up, collared blouse.

St. Albert is one of just two Catholic high schools in the same area that requires boys to wear a button-up, collared shirt and tie.

Polo shirts are part of the dress codes at the 10 schools examined by The Accipiter. Some of the schools make shirts and ties optional for the boys. The polo shirts are restricted to solid colors with the schools' logos.

The high schools examined were: Dowling of West Des Moines, Kuemper Catholic of Carroll, and the Omaha schools of Skutt, Roncalli, Mercy, Marian, Duchesne, Gross, Creighton Prep and Mount Michael of Elkhorn.

The only other Catholic school that requires boys to wear a shirt and tie is Mount Michael, an all-boys school. Creighton Prep even goes as far as to let the boys wear a hooded sweatshirt as long as it is the school brand.

At St. Albert, students are allowed to wear green spirit polos only on Fridays.

But is this an issue at St. Albert?

According to a Google poll of St. Albert High School students, changing from shirts and blouses to polos doesn't have overwhelming support. Of the 84 people participating in the survey, only 40 said it

***“Dress shirts should be buttoned to the top for young men while wearing a necktie. HS boys must wear a necktie that is tied at the shirt collar. Style, color and pattern should be appropriate for business dress. No string or bow ties are allowed on normal dress days. If they choose to wear a sweater, an appropriate dress shirt and a tie are also required.”***

- SA dress code

***“Solid colors: white or blue, long or short sleeve, collared, and Oxford style. Dress shirts and blouses are to be worn completely tucked in. Blouses should be buttoned up near the neck for young women.”***

- SA dress code

would be a good change for boys and just 36 supported the change for girls.

In fact, only 14 people in the survey said they want to get rid of ties.

Principal David Schweitzer said students have been wearing shirts with ties and blouses since St. Albert opened more than 50 years ago. It is a policy, supported by parents, parishes, alumni and administrators, designed to make St. Albert students look professional and distinguishable from students at other schools.

“It's not what they had in mind,” Schweitzer said of

polo shirts and tennis shoes. The school board established a dress code of collared shirts and ties because they wanted St. Albert “to be a distinctive environment.”

Requiring blouses and shirts with ties are “reasonable guidelines and they match the historical expectations of the school,” he said.

Schweitzer acknowledges that polos would be more comfortable – he doesn't particularly like wearing ties either – but they are also too casual. A school full of students wearing shirts with ties and blouses is more impressive, he said.

When dressed in a polo shirt and athletic shoes, Schweitzer said, students “don't present themselves as a high school student.”

# 3 Different Perspectives

The Accipiter sought different viewpoints on the dress code from an administrator, a teacher, and a student. Principal David Schweitzer, science teacher Devin Yeoman and Senior Harry Venteicher agreed to answer staff writer Anna Schewe's questions.

***Do you believe the dress code is consistent with the philosophy of a uniform?***

**Schweitzer:** Yes. The philosophy of the dress code is to offer comfortable, affordable options that enable students to distinguish themselves as accepting school expectations and being ready to learn.

Initially, it was put in place at St. Albert and other Catholic schools to promote modesty and require students to present themselves in a respectful manner that didn't create distractions from learning. The dress code was also implemented to promote equity by minimizing differences in clothing and appearance, so regardless of a family's financial means, students could dress in a like manner with their peers.

An additional aspect is that students should be dressed for school in a different manner than they would choose to relax at home or socially with friends ... In a sense, the school uniform was to be an equivalent of work clothes in the adult world and a sign that students come to school to do their job.

As dress expectations for the work place have become more casual, the dress code at St. Albert has also become more casual by allowing more sources for clothing, and choices for shoes, sweaters, fleece, make-up, hairstyles, accessories, ect. Those are fitting changes, as our students still present themselves as members of an identifiable St. Albert school community who are ready to learn.

**Venteicher:** Yes, a uniform typically means just a certain way a group of people have to dress. What group you belong to that requires you to dress as a unit has the ability to set their own guidelines.

**Yeoman:** Yes, the dress code is consistent with the philosophy of a uniform. Uniforms are suppose to unite groups. They create a community environment where everyone feels they are on the same page. I feel that a school should run like a team; teams wear uniforms to create a bond.

***Do you believe the dress code is enforced fairly?***

**Schweitzer:** Yes, I believe the dress code is enforced fairly. The guidelines are reasonable, and there are always people who push the edges of those guidelines, and others who unknowingly purchase or wear items that are not approved by the code. Students are given warnings, and they are surrounded by excellent examples of the dress code by their peers. When students don't change after their warning, or they continue to dress outside the guidelines and norms, they can receive a demerit.

It's interesting that some students take it very personally when they receive a warning or clarification that their dress or a piece of clothing doesn't fit the dress code. I compare it to speeding. The speeding limits are established to promote order and keep people safe. I and others often push those limits, and when I do, I accept that I could get a warning or ticket. On a couple of occasions, I've received a ticket, I deserved it, and I didn't get mad at the policemen because I should have known better.

**Venteicher:** I don't think the dress code at St. Albert is treated fairly. On many occasions I have seen some students wear a hoody and not get in trouble for it and others wear a sweater that isn't a color in the handbook, but it looks appropriate, and told not to wear it again. I'm fine with the school having a dress code, but they need to have all the teachers and faculty members have a cohesive understanding of what the code is and that they need to enforce it in the same manner.

**Yeoman:** No, because dress codes are hard to enforce, especially one that is vague. What is classified as clean shaved? What counts as a logo? Etc.? Also, who has time to memorize 50-60 dress code requirements while they are grading papers, creating lesson plans, and educating over 100 students?

***Do you believe the dress code is communicated accurately? Are there rules that are unclear?***

**Schweitzer:** I do . . . although I know that it is a challenge to clarify the dress code in the many the places it is posted, and across dozens of classrooms with staff who vary in age and attentiveness to the dress code. That's further complicated by the challenges of regular days, spirit days, and out-of-uniform days. Ironically, I hear a bit more concern about staff who don't always enforce every component of the dress code, than I hear concerns about people who are too strict.

Many teachers simply get busy teaching, and sometimes they just don't notice the violation. By the time students choose shoes, slacks or a skort, a dress shirt or blouse, tie, sweater, sweatshirt, etc, plus jackets, hair, style, jewelry etc . . . along with the fit, style, appropriateness, and other details such as a buttoned collar or the color of a sweater . . . in a class of 20+ students . . . in seven periods a day, plus arrival and passing times, the teachers are facing thousands of dress code details to process. All-in-all, I think students make responsible choices, and teachers do a great job of working with our students to create an excellent learning environment.

**Venteicher:** Amongst the faculty I do not think they have a cohesive understanding of how to handle the dress code. Some teachers are very lackluster and some are extremely strict. I personally think that the dress code is overly complicated in some aspects. Namely on the sweaters. It only allows for certain sweaters to be worn. I think that it is redundant and they either need to loosen up on the sweaters and just let students wear a nice looking sweater or pullover.

**Yeoman:** Yes, it is communicated accurately. You can go look at the rules. But, what is done subjectively is the interpretation of the rules. What is a logo? What is clean shaved? These have all different meanings to different individuals. I honestly do not know the rules word-for-word, so I do not know if they are unclear or not.





