

To wear or not to wear: High school dress code limits expression

by junior Payton Sherwood

Thankfully today, young women are taught to love themselves, to embrace the way their bodies are, any shape, any size. But unfortunately, I feel our dress code teaches a message that is both contradictory and unequal.

Hudson High School's mission statement is "to create an effective learning environment for ALL students." Unfortunately, the borderline sexist and oppressive dress code does no such thing. Instead of teaching students what is appropriate to wear in public, it teaches them to suppress how they choose to express themselves.

It teaches us to accept the hypocrisy that although the world tells us our bodies are beautiful, they must be concealed eight hours a day.

Even the phrase "all students" seems questionable. For the males in our school, as long as their shirts do not promote any illegal substance or promote gang violence, they are able to throw on anything they so choose, or so it seems. Meanwhile the females have a rigorous list of do's and don'ts on how wide our straps must be and how much of our thigh can be visible.

The dress code does, however, demean males in

a very different way. By mandating the way young women dress, the policy seems to be promoting the idea that males are incapable of controlling themselves, that they would be totally unable to focus at the mere sight of a shoulder.

The dress code is also flawed because it is just not enforced based on what is written in the handbook. It is enforced only on occasion, seemingly at random.

One day someone might get away with wearing an off-the-shoulder shirt, and the next day one of your friends is asked to put on a jacket for wearing the exact same thing.

If such policies are going to be in place, they need to

be enforced fairly and consistently. But I question if they should exist at all.

How people dress is often seen as their way of expressing themselves. It is an insight to one's personality. Most of the time it takes guts to put yourself out there and proudly say, "This is me." For some, the way they dress might be the only way they feel comfortable saying who they are and what they believe in. Everyone should have the right to express themselves freely, including school.

to prohibited conduct or similar displays.

THE DRESS CODE:

- Students are expected to adhere to reasonable levels of cleanliness and modesty, which means all students are to wear clothing that **covers their bodies from shoulder to mid-thigh.**
- Students are expected to wear clothing that is **appropriate to their age level** and that **does not disrupt the school or the educational program.**
- Students are **prohibited from wearing** clothing **advertising or promoting items illegal** for use by minors including, but not limited to, **alcohol or tobacco**; from wearing shoes with cleats except for outdoor track practices; and from wearing clothing **displaying obscenity, profanity, vulgarity, racial or sexual remarks or inferences**, making references

• **Caps and other headgear are not to be worn** during the school day from **7:45 a.m. until 3:15 p.m.**

• Students are also **prohibited from wearing chains**, as they could potentially be used as weapons.

• **Saggy pants** are also **not appropriate** in the school workplace.

• **Shirts / tops** are expected to **cover the torso** of the body. **Open back shirts or tops** will not be allowed. **Tops** must also have at least a **one-inch shoulder strap. No spaghetti straps** will be allowed.

• **Shorts/skorts/skirts** need to follow the **mid-thigh rule.**



Looking ahead: Predictions for the 2018 elections

If there's one topic that gets everyone on the edge of their seats, it's midterm elections. Well it's that time again, so strap in. These elections may not be as highly publicized and closely followed as presidential elections, but they could have big implications for the future of the state and the nation.

With two fiercely opposed parties and a president with historically low approval ratings, the country faces a powerful decision: Do we want two more years of a Republican congress, or do we want to hand the reins off to the Democrats? The 2018 election is going to decide who takes a majority in congress, and right now, it's anyone's game. It is really too early to make any definite predictions about the election in November, but there is a lot of information available.

The Republican party holds a majority in both houses of Congress. They hold a tight lead in the Senate, with 51 seats to the Democrats' 49. There are 34 Senate seats up for grabs in this year's election. To gain a majority, the Democrats will only need to win two of the eight Republican seats, but they will also need to defend their own 26, many of which are in states that Trump won in 2016.

In the House of Representatives, Republicans hold a bigger majority, with 239 to the Democrats' 193. All 435 House seats are in the mix in November, and Democrats will need to win 24 additional seats to take the majority.

The numbers look pretty good for the Republicans, but some things boost the Democrats' chances for success. Democrats won big in local elections in 2017, taking many Republican seats and proving they're a real threat in 2018. Polling from RealClearPolitics shows 48% of people across the country say they would vote Democrat if the election was today, with about 37% saying they'd vote Republican.

As the president continues to stir up controversy over the next nine months, support for Democrats is likely to keep going up. The conflict within the Republican Party may hurt their chances as well. The party is torn between its traditional platform and the unique, divisive nature of Trump's politics. Many Republican candidates are now trying to distance themselves from the president, which could hurt their numbers. I wouldn't be surprised to see Democrats take at least one house of congress in November.

Did you know?

In a poll of 23 students at Hudson High School, 87% said that they were not thinking about voting in the November of 2018 Iowa election. 13% said they were thinking about voting in the November of 2018 Iowa election.