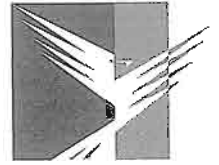


Eumemmerring College
College Administration

Frawley Road Hallam 3803
Telephone 9703 1266
Facsimile 9796 4727



Eumemmerring
College

28 May, 2007

Ms Karen Ellingford
Executive Officer
Education and Training Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE 3002

Dear Karen,

I have been asked by the College Council of Eumemmerring College to prepare a submission to the Government Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools.

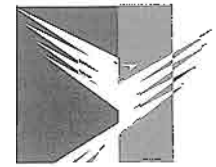
Eumemmerring College remains one of the largest State Secondary Colleges in Victoria and draws students from a variety of social, economic and cultural backgrounds. The College comprises four campuses, three Year 7 – 10 campuses (Endeavour Hills, Fountain Gate and Gleneagles) and a senior campus at Hallam. The College Council has a uniform policy and has determined the uniform items that conform to the dress code. Students at all campuses are expected to wear full school uniform and there are sanctions for students who breach the code. The College Council has consistently voted unanimously in support of a strong uniform policy.

The attached submission reflects the motion unanimously passed by the College Council at the Council meeting on May 22nd 2007 in response to points raised in the inquiry.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Peddlesden', written in a cursive style.

Sue Peddlesden
Acting Principal
Eumemmerring College



The benefits and costs of mandatory uniforms.

- Eumemmerring College Council believes that it is important that staff are able to readily identify the student population. Having a uniform makes it more difficult for “outsiders” to enter the school grounds. A uniform improves safety for the school population.
- A College uniform contributes to the students developing a sense of identity as a member of the school community.
- While it is acknowledged that there is a cost to purchasing prescribed uniform items, the parent representatives on Council believe the peer pressure associated with free dress would also be expensive. On balance, the Council believes that uniform is the less expensive option.

The views of school communities about dress codes and school uniforms

- The College Council has consistently voted unanimously for a compulsory uniform.
- There is strong parent support within the community for a compulsory uniform.
- A small percentage of parents oppose specific parts of the code and are entrenched in their position eg they believe piercings should be permitted

The most cost efficient and practical uniform procurement arrangements

- A tender process needs to be used to select companies to supply the uniform. Enhanced guidelines on the tender process may be useful eg new tenders should occur after so many years.
- The number of suppliers needs to be limited to reduce variation in uniform items.

Matters which need to be considered to ensure dress codes and uniform policies are consistent with anti-discrimination legislation and health promotion policies

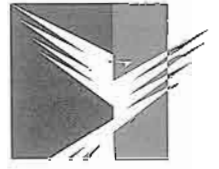
- It is agreed that the uniform code needs to be consistent with anti-discrimination legislation.
- The College raises awareness of the need to be sun-smart and provides options but has not made the wearing of sun-smart headwear compulsory. Secondary students have shown a reluctance to wear hats and caps that are included in the uniform code. This is despite involving students in the selection of the items.

Appropriate enforcement and sanctions

- If schools are permitted to establish compulsory dress codes then schools must be able to sanction students that do not conform.
- Detention is a suitable consequence for minor transgressions.
- Withdrawing students from activities including classes should be permitted where students are unwilling to conform to the uniform code. Students must be provided with appropriate work while withdrawn from class.
- Some parents are complicit with their child. Schools should be able to put sanctions in place for students who persistently breach the uniform code even when supported by the parent.
- Strong enforcement of the uniform code is necessary to establish an environment where students accept the need to conform to school rules. It is normal for some students to seek to express their individuality and the dress code is an obvious area of focus. Schools need a clear mandate to enforce a dress code.

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Appropriate exemption criteria and processes

- Exemptions to the dress code are accepted when based on medical grounds eg medical certificate, letter from a physiotherapist.
- Clear processes are in place to provide uniform passes for students who cannot conform to the dress codes for reasons beyond their control. Uniform passes are for a short period of time.

National and international trends

- Council has no comment on this item.