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**EUROA SECONDARY COLLEGE**

**“A united community where everybody has responsibility in preparing youth for their future.”**  
**Challenge Empowerment Resilience Respect**

31<sup>st</sup> May 2007

Ms Karen Ellingford  
Executive Officer  
Education and Training Committee  
Parliament House, Spring Street  
East Melbourne 3002

Dear Ms Ellingford

**Submission – S159 Government Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victoria Schools**

Euroa Secondary College School Council and the school community supports dress codes and the compulsory wearing of school uniforms. A uniform is practical in the school environment and is also a security measure ensuring ready identification of students. It is also designed with the welfare and safety of the students in mind and provides them with a sense of belonging within the school community. When changes to the uniform are being considered, consultation with all families, teachers and students is undertaken and student comment noted and considered. This includes consideration for dress requirements for those students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

It must also be noted that dress codes of teachers should be considered to ensure they are appropriate to their role and in line with the health and safety requirements of their workplace.

The current system at Euroa Secondary College provides a uniform distribution system run by parents who have the responsibility for ordering, distributing and collecting payment on designated days throughout the school term. This system is supported by the school’s administration team and continues to prove successful, giving parents and students access to new or replacement items as the need arises.

While staff do their utmost to ensure students abide by the dress code, it can cause them some anxiety and frustration when trying to enforce it particularly with a few parents and independent students on youth allowance. Reasons for this refusal to wear uniform is sometimes based on financial circumstances however casual clothes often prove more expensive and the Council makes every effort to ensure costs of school uniforms remain within the financial constraints of all families. We can identify with these problems however and have taken measures to provide uniforms to assist families in difficult circumstances.

There are also some instances where students who usually are in uniform may not be for a short period while new items are purchased or otherwise replaced. Systems and processes are in place to ensure these students receive exemption from teachers if they provide a written request from their parent.

While we support and strongly promote our own policy in this area and would like more authority to enforce the wearing of the uniform, we support other schools that may choose not to introduce compulsory uniforms. We believe this should be their choice and must be made by individual councils and their school communities who will all have differing circumstances, opinions and issues to consider.

As a School Council we will continue to promote and support compulsory uniforms in our school however we strongly believe that the introduction of mandatory school uniforms and dress codes in any school or

other institution will not be a positive or successful process unless there are also effective and equitable processes in place to ensure compliance.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Yours sincerely

Michael Bell & Bev McLaine  
Executive Officer & President  
Euroa Secondary College Council