

Principal McMahon,

Other than a dog, no one likes to be told what to do. We enjoy options. Options are a choice and a choice is freedom. Speaking of choices, there are a lot of schools that seem to think uniforms are the way to go for its students.

Wrong.

Uniforms are not freedoms. Uniforms are options taken away. What works for one school does not work for all schools. Everyday students walk through our halls with reds, blues, greens, black, yellows, and definitely orange this season—clothing peacocks. It is a wonderful sight. These same students go from class to class, enjoy lunch, talk with friends and teachers, and even are involved with their education. Amazing and all without uniforms. So what part in this school day did a school uniform play? Not one. Schools do not need uniforms. Uniforms insult students in a you-are-not-smart-enough-to-make-your-own-choices way.

A crucial experience in a young person's life is experimenting with clothes and "their look." All in black one day, skater the next. Perhaps a complete Old Navy ensemble just for spice. These are important personas to experience all in an effort to define who we are as students.

When we put on a new style, we can see if it fits and if it does—excellent. In this way, we can find out identity. This is helpful, healthy. A student who has an identity will be secure. They will be less likely to get into trouble. And they won't get caught in the grip of peer pressure because they will have a strong sense of who they are.

Adolescents and pre-adolescents spend too much time trying to fit in with the crowd. This is because most of us do not know who we are. Clothes allow us to find out. With uniforms, we are just another acned face in the crowd.

With the freedom to choose what we can wear, we can choose who we are and we can create that necessary feeling of belonging. Wait. I am not saying that this freedom of choice makes us kids followers. No. It makes us choosers. I believe the ability to choose allows us to become a stronger individual. This may not make total sense to adults, but it is true. Yet, I know parents and teachers can understand this desire to choose because adults were once kids too.

What boggles my mind is that adults see school uniforms as creating a cohesive group. They are the ones who want uniforms. But they will not be the ones to wear them. We will. For this reason, I urge everyone to think seriously about school uniforms before we make them a depressing reality.

It is said that school uniforms can improve grades. Unfortunately, this is illogical. No basis in ability. Uniforms are inanimate objects; they do not think and they cannot act. They are about as capable as improving grades as a sign on the wall saying, "Improve Grades." Uniforms cannot do anything on their own. Students need to choose to do well. If students can *choose* to do well, they can choose to do well in their regular garb. Every day I show this to be true because the choice is mine. Wearing a uniform will not teach me think. Allowing me the choice to make my own decisions will teach me to think.

It is ironic to think of uniforms as a fad, but they are. Like all fads, this one will fade away too. It is unlikely that I will have to face a school uniform in my few remaining years of school, but I believe it is an issue for students to prepare themselves for because you never know when you will be stripped of a freedom.