

Fashionable education

What happens when teen trends enter the school?

The first day of the 2004-2005 school year for the majority of students in the Tahoe Truckee vicinity is just five days away. Students are infiltrating the malls in Reno, Sacramento and Roseville.

They are exercising their rights as American citizens to buy local goods while contributing thousands of dollars to the economy in an attempt to gain a fashionable, yet functional wardrobe that promotes comfort and ease in learning.

Feeling good is looking good, right? Students of all ages, once they are permitted to choose their own clothes and outfits for the day, put forth considerable effort into deciding colors, styles and emblems that they feel best represent who they are, or who they want to be.

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If you watch television or read teen and fashion magazines, it is apparent that the styles from the 1980s are making a comeback. In addition, women, both young and old, continue to reveal more of their bodies. Adolescent men are under the impression that at least two to three inches of their

underwear should be visible to all who come in contact with them. On the same note, teenage women have taken a liking to wearing low ride jeans, pants and skirts that make it virtually impossible for the top of their undergarments not to be seen.

There is nothing wrong with following fashion trends. Without sounding like an old fogey, some of today's in-vogue fashions seem inappropriate for students to wear to school. Little do they know that their outfits

can sometimes be distracting for other students in their classes.

Students want to create their own identity — despite attempts to

maintain school-wide dress codes, such as tank top straps being the width of two fingers, no visible mid-drifts, and an absence of inappropriate emblems and icons (the list goes on).

Students deserve the right to choose an image for themselves.

By Vicki Isacowitz

ON THE CHALKBOARD



Their choice in clothing is an avenue for their declaration. It is important to allow them this freedom. Closing opportunities for expression stifle creativity and can often

lead to rebellion. Parents and educators should encourage students to be who they are, while making tasteful and appropriate choices in apparel.

It can be difficult for school administrations to maintain a learning environment when fashions conflict with dress codes. And then there's the puberty factor.

It is difficult for teenage boys who are right smack in the middle of puberty to concentrate on solving X for Y in algebra class when fellow female classmates are revealing more of their skin than that which is covered. In turn, inappropriate language or phrases teenage boys choose to wear across their chests on T-shirts from the trendy Hot Topic stores or the Internet are sometimes funny, but more often are offensive and degrading.

This can lead to a sense of discomfort when students are asked to cover themselves up because they are revealing too much. Teachers, administrators and faculty do not want to see what is being exposed. Many schools keep big ugly sweat-

shirts and T-shirts on hand for this situation. When unsuitable outfits keep coming to school, parents are often called to take their students home, or bring a change of more acceptable clothing.

Student styles are on the verge of another transformation. Like history, fashion repeats itself. Very short pleated mini-skirts, argyle sweaters, blazers, Izod shirts with the collar flipped up, and other preppy styles are sneaking their way back into stores and catalogs. There should be a resurgence of oversized Champion sweat-shirts, pegged jeans, and flannel shirts by next September.

In the meantime, there are many styles of cool clothes that are appropriate for students to wear to school. Let it be said that there are plenty of students who demonstrate proper and becoming choices in fashion.

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