

traffic jams on the Pacific Coast highway. Cars were back-

9-23-68

Dress Code: Here To Stay

"The debate is over on the dress code and it will be enforced," Superintendent Denzil Morrissey of the Santa Cruz City Schools declared today.

The code governing grooming and attire of students in the Santa Cruz High School District was adopted, Morrissey said, after more than a year of work and due process. "The procedures, which have been carefully worked out, are legally sound," he said.

Board President Eli Bariteau denied that students were "tricked" in the formulation of the code. He said he is attempting to determine how widespread opposition is among students.

Former President Keith Shaffer, who presided during much of the time that the code was being considered by the board, declared it was adopted only after "due deliberation" in which everyone had a chance to voice his or her opinions.

"Just because we didn't do what some of them may have wanted, doesn't mean that we didn't listen," Shaffer said. The code is "what the taxpayers who support the public schools want," he said.

He suggested that the opposition represents an attempt at rule by minority. Shaffer said that dissidents may either challenge the code in court or elect four sympathetic board members.

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Flu Epidemic

Dress Code Is Here To Stay: Morrissey

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bers at the trustee election next April.

Concerning that election, Mrs. Eleanor Foster, who spoke Friday night during a protest meeting, today said she was not implying criticism of board action. She said that she intended to state that parents and students should work together so that when there is an election, a board would be elected that "understands democracy."

Trustee Eugene Adams, an attorney who helped to fashion the language of the code, stated that student views prevailed "in a great number of cases" and that unanimous opinion was expressed in all areas except provisions on hair length and beards.

He called the code "reasonable" and said that it is needed and that majority of the students want it and will abide by it.

Trustee Don Starr, a member of the advisory committee on the code, commented, "The board is the elected body. It has the responsibility to make the final decision."

But, said Starr, the board is interested in student views and he added, "We look forward to a series of meetings between trustees and student leaders to discuss many problems affecting schools."

Starr, however, was critical of parents who supported the majority opposition. "I should back the law regardless of whether they like or not," he said.

Criticism of the code came from John Wasserburger, president of the Santa Cruz Teachers Association.

A speech and debate contest at Soquel High School, Wasserburger said that it was his personal opinion that the contest resulted in a liberalization of dress standards at Soquel. "For the first time, we had mustaches and shoulder-length hair. We'll have anything under the code," Wasserburger said.

He said the code would lead him to lower grooming standards for students taking speech and debate contests.

Wasserburger remarked that the drafters of the code anticipated all of the problems that have been created. "Reasonable dress standards are no longer possible," he said. "We've begun a game to beat it. It is open to all interpretations," he noted one student is wearing hair in a bun.

The rank and file of the Santa Cruz Teachers Association continued to back the code because of adopted school policies. They would have preferred to have become involved in the whole issue.

He denied charges that teachers did not oppose the code because they'd lose their jobs.

He said teachers would not go low a middle of the road.

Wasserburger said he plans to bring the issue before the teachers board when it meets.

day. He said the board empowered him at the September 19 meeting to speak on any subject he chose.

Wasserburger also noted that a contradiction in the code's enforcement is "obvious" in the fact that the official cheerleaders' uniforms violate its provisions on skirt length.

Morrissey, however, said the costumes would not be redesigned. They are, he stated, a "normal, acceptable part of the school culture that has existed for years. There is nothing bizarre or extravagant or unique. That is simply going to stay the way it is."

Morrissey said the code is "moderate" and that it is the result of the democratic process. Without student participation, he added, the document might have been much stricter.

The superintendent observed that the board has said the code will remain "a living policy that will continue to be subject to constructive suggestions." He said, however, that particular attention will be paid to the administrators who have primary responsibility for the welfare of students and the operation of the schools.

He conceded that the code represented a liberalization of standards at Soquel High School.

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