

Most students are OK with new school system dress code

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CHRONICLE INTERN

A new dress code has been adopted by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school system that will go into effect when students return from Christmas break in 2003.

The new policy was approved under the auspices of teachers, principals, parents and students, according to the school system.

A fairly lax dress code had been in place at various schools throughout the school system. The new dress code is designed to provide consistency throughout every school. The dress code does not suggest any method of uniform, but it will prohibit several popular styles worn by students.

For example, sagging pants will not be allowed, nor will hats, caps or bandanas (unless they are worn for religious purposes).

Daniel Piggott, principal of Carver High School, implemented his own dress code last year, which was similar to the school system's dress code.

"I believe in the dress code, because it prepares the students for their matriculation out of high school and into the real world," Piggott said. "But I feel that the dress code should apply to the adults and teachers, as well. They are the role models for these teenagers, and their professionalism sets the stage for the maturity of our students."

Students have mixed feelings about the dress code.

Carver students have an advantage over most students, because the Carver faculty had implemented a dress code previously.

"The good thing about Mr. Piggott's dress code, last year, was the consequences. They sent people home, but also everyone suffers sometimes because certain people

"We are trying to be positive about (the dress code)," Pungert said. "We don't want for this to be a punitive approach."

— Doug Pungert, school system attorney

can't follow the rules," said senior Tiffany Flowers.

Some students feel that the dress code is a waste of time, yet many feel that it will enhance the image of individuals and the school as a whole.

"I think it's good because some students dress provocative, and it makes you look bad as a school, when you come to the school as a parent or a visitor," junior Lori Lindsey said.

The dress code also prohibits clothing bearing any tobacco, drug or alcohol advertising, as well as graphic, vulgar or violent pictures or words.

"Some dress to reflect how they feel. On exam day, you may want to throw on sweat pants, and then on Monday, you may want to wear the new outfit you bought over the weekend," said senior Juwon Crowell. "But I feel that if you give people the leeway to dress however they want, it's no telling how they would dress. With everything you need values and some kind of rules."

Most students say they will adjust to obey by the new dress code.

"I'm going to wear what I want to wear, but if they tell me to take it off, I'm going to do it," said junior Wali Pitt.

Doug Pungert, the school system's attorney, says that students who violate the new dress code will be dealt with. School officials will ask students to change offending clothing items, he said. In some cases parents may be called to bring appropriate clothing for their children. If a student continuously ignores the new dress code, Pungert said, detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension may be a possibility.

"We are trying to be positive about (the dress code)," Pungert said. "We don't want for this to be a punitive approach."



Lots of young people sag their pants so that their boxer shorts show. That style will not be welcome at schools in Forsyth County next year.

WSSU vice chancellor returns from Australia

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Dr. Melody Pierce, vice chancellor for Student Affairs at Winston-Salem State University, recently traveled to Australia for an Australian Exchange Program from Dec. 1-10, while serving on a four member delegation for the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

While there, Pierce made a presentation titled "Overview of the History of Historically Black Colleges and Universities" at the Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory (ANZSSA NSW/ACT) Regional Conference in Bur-

radoo, Australia. The delegation met with student services staff at several universities in Canberra, the nation's capital, and in Sydney. The purpose of trip and campus meetings was to exchange ideas regarding delivery enhancements to student services.

WSSU is continually working to improve and promote international relations by sharing cultural economic and educational resources and ideas from the Piedmont Triad with friends abroad. "It is refreshing to have our faculty, student and staff engage in new and different ideas for higher education on an international level," said Dr. Harold L. Martin Sr., chancellor of WSSU.

Hairston

from page A1

decrease the number of critics who say the NAACP is out of touch.

Hairston also hopes to form stronger alliances with other African-American organizations in the city so that the groups can see eye-to-eye more instead of duking it out, as was the case with the school bond referendum of 2001. The NAACP and the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity urged the community to vote against the bonds, while the Black Leadership Roundtable and the Urban League lobbied for passage of the referendum.

"When we come out divided on certain things, we are going to have to accept whatever the decision makers hand down to us. We have to find some common ground," Hairston said. "And we have to stop asking the decision makers for what we want and start telling them what we want."

Hairston believes that his background in law enforcement will help him when it comes to police brutality complaints. Such complaints are among the most common at NAACP offices. Hairston also believes that he can be objective when dealing with the Police Department, although he had a well-publicized falling out with Police Chief Linda Davis in 1999.

"If the department is right, we have to say that the department is right. If they are wrong, we have to say that."

Hairston was one of three African-American police sergeants who were demoted after a rap concert at Joel Coliseum got out of hand. The

sergeants were off duty but hired to provide security for the concert. Despite their efforts, fights broke out and there were allegations of live sex acts being performed on stage.

Davis demoted the sergeants for failing to adequately secure the concert, an action that enraged the black community because no one else, including other officers hired to provide security or coliseum officials that booked the raunchy rap act, was admonished.

Protests were held and a letter-writing campaign was initiated on behalf of the sergeants. Even the state NAACP got involved. Their demotions were eventually overturned and soon after that, Hairston retired.

"I don't blame the department for what happened. I may blame certain people in the department...I also have to take blame myself for letting myself get in a position like that."

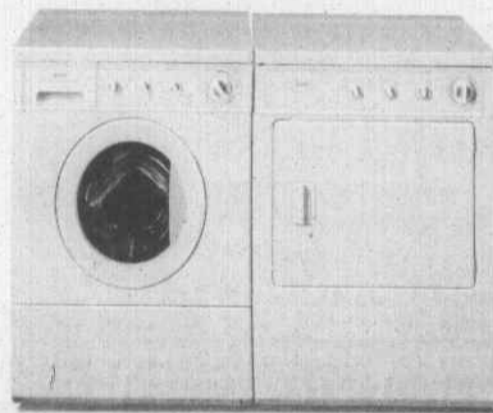
There was one positive thing that sprang from the demotions, Hairston said. The incident showed that the voices of the community en masse can have an effect.

"The community turned that whole thing around for us."

Hairston plans to use that lesson during his two-year term as NAACP president. He wants the community to see that there is strength and power in their action and voices. He wants to convince them to stand up.

"We have become complacent. We are under attack from all fronts. Everywhere we look, we seem to be taking steps backward."

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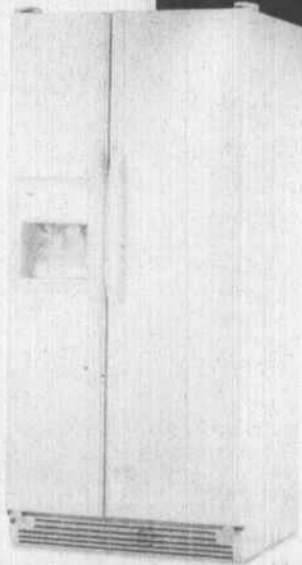
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