



Calgary Christian School

Elementary Campus
Preschool - Grade 6
2839 49 Street SW
Calgary, AB T3E 3X9
Phone: 403-242-2896
Fax: 403-242-6682

Secondary Campus
Grade 7 - 12
5029 26 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB T3E 0R5
Phone: 403-242-2896
Fax: 403-686-1281

March 15, 2014

Regarding CCS, Dress Codes and Uniforms

Recently, the question to consider a school uniform as the dress expectation for the entire student body was brought before the Board. This is not a new request. The topic of uniforms has been a recurring one over the last 15 years. Most recently in January 2014, at the request of the School Council, questions regarding the desirability of going to a school uniform were included in the annual CCS survey and the results were shared with the Board.

In short, while 'pro uniform' responses in the survey reached 30%, just over 46% of those surveyed were against uniforms as a standard of dress, and another 24% were undecided.

At the board level, these results prompted a lively discussion that covered the traditions, philosophy and history of CCS, as well as anecdotal evidence related to the cost, impact, benefits and drawbacks experienced at other schools with mandatory uniforms. One particularly poignant observation was that uniforms represent different things to different people in different places – in other words, there is a cultural statement that varies from place to place in regards to what uniforms mean, and Calgary is no exception.

Said another way, establishing a school uniform is a statement made internally and externally about our school community. In the case of CCS, we need to ask: what would the statement be to our constituents, our greater community, and to our God should we choose to use uniforms?

It is apparent to the Board that the decision is not simply a matter of democratic will, but a deeper, more profound question of identify and purpose. "How do uniforms support/fulfill CCS's vision, faith statement and educational philosophy?"

Calgary Christian School has through its history supported the responsible decision making of individuals and families where school clothing is concerned. This personal approach to discernment applies to the components, styles and costs of clothing worn by students, the display of which is supervised by school administrators and faculty using a dress code that allows for individual expression and comfort within defined boundaries of modesty, cleanliness, and suitability for specific activities. This "personal choice and responsibility model" has been a part of CCS's long standing commitment to provide a communal environment of learning, encouragement, cultural engagement, and God-honoring governance.

Weighed in the balance with other significant decisions that must be made in the near term – related to CCS growth, expansion needs and other long-term strategic plans – it is the opinion of leadership that the uniform issue should take a secondary or lesser position. Ultimately, it will be considered in the light of a more clearly stated, long-term direction for the school; a direction currently being reviewed and defined through the strategic planning activities of the Board and Society focus groups.

It is the Board's fervent hope that we as a Society draw together in solidarity and focus on these other imminent challenges to better equip us to effectively provide quality, Christ-centred education to our children and generations to come.

Ken DeWyn

CSCE Executive Director

kdewyn@csce.net

