Stuyvesant Students Protest the Dress Code

By Lisbet Wences

The first time a dress code was added was in 1969 by the U.S. Supreme Court. Students at multiple high schools in Des Moines Independent School District wore black armbands during the Vietnam War to protest against it. As said in the article about dress codes on Findlaw "The Supreme Court determined that schools may limit student expression." Redress the dress code" is what students at Stuyvesant High School were telling the staff and faculty. In lower Manhattan, New York on June 5th of 2012, students at Stuyvesant High School went against the dress code. Some things that the dress code policy states is that any sayings and illustrations must have good taste and that shorts, dresses, and skirts must be below the fingertips as well as no exposure of shoulders, midriffs, undergarments, and lower backs. Many of the students wore clothing items that went against the dress code such as tank tops and short shorts.

Many of the students felt that girls were being sexualized by the dress code. According to the Huffington Post, one student said, "They're like sexualizing our outfits by telling us what to wear. And like I don't know I guess it's more important to learn in school rather than be like persecuted for your dress." People also believe that the dress code makes them seem as if they are just "teens who can't control themselves when they see too much skin." The people of the school feel that they are being judged inappropriately, but the principal thinks that the dress code policy is needed. The WCPO news website states that the school principal said before the dress code was added "The dress code policy was intended to create a better learning environment." He also said, "Some things are a distraction. And we don't need to distract students from what is going on here, which is learning." Although the principal says that some things are a distraction, the people themselves are saying that they can control themselves and don't necessarily need such a strict dress code.

The students think that the dress code is very strict, biased and unfair. Both boys and girls believe the dress code is not right. However, the principal states that the dress code is there to keep the school a learning environment and be safe from distractions. Do you think protesting was the right thing to do? And do you think schools should "Redress the Dress Code" or leave it how it is?