

Dress Code Raises Controversy

Wednesday, September 1st students gathered in the cafeteria, many wearing cropped shirts and high cut shorts, clothing deemed inappropriate by Salida High School's current dress code as a form of protest against the rules.

Sophomores Jayla Peacock and Lily Modrzewski took initiative and were the main organizers of the protest. After spreading the word through social media, and making a group chat with over 50 people, the majority of the school was aware of the protest, and a large portion of those people participated.

Dean of Students Cory Scheffel said, "I think the day of protest was more of a national movement."

Salida High School isn't the only school who protested their dress codes. Students around the country also participated as part of a nationwide movement to abolish sexism in the widely accepted rules.

Senior Maia Lee explained her reasoning for protesting the dress code, "I've always really struggled with the dress code rules and since this is my senior year I just wanted to make a change at the school."

After a conversation with Scheffel, she decided to take her ideas to the student council

on the 22d of September with the intention of trying to get the dress code changed.

"If there's a problem, talk to us and work with us," Scheffel said, "Our number one priority is education, not getting on kids' cases about stuff."

A big problem many people have with the dress code is how it disproportionately affects girls at the school.

"I think over the years [the school] has done a good job of erasing anything that's gender specific," Scheffel said, "It doesn't specifically refer to anything by gender, but in that there are still issues that need to be addressed."

In a three page list, Lee wrote to the student council about how the dress code is extremely selective towards female clothing. A large portion of the rules state how crop tops, tank tops, and short shorts are inappropriate without mentioning much about clothing typically worn by men.

She wrote, "The amount of times I have been dress coded for showing a centimeter of my stomach while guys are walking around with half their underwear hanging out is disgusting."

It has also been argued that dress codes support rape culture. Lee explained how:

Story by Lucia Zettler

"Dress codes teach girls to cover up instead of teaching boys to mind their own business."

The questions why it's okay to interrupt a student's education because what they're wearing is considered distracting.

"It should be the other way around," Lee wrote, "The person distracted should be sent home for being creepy."

Peacock agrees that there are a lot of things wrong with the dress code.

She said, "It's super outdated right now, and I just feel like there's nothing distracting about having a shirt a couple inches above your belly button."

Sexist or not, dress codes have been a part of schools for a very long time.

"They're built off a long tradition of having dress codes going back to when it was considered immoral to show an ankle," Dean Cory Scheffel said.

Many people also feel personally targeted by how the dress code is enforced. Some girls get dress coded for shirts violating the rules, while others do not.

"I just feel like it's not being evenly distributed to every-



PROTEST: Many students participated in a protest intentionally breaking the dress code on September 1st. Students from left to right are seniors Jayden Russell and Jose Betancourt and juniors Shannon Hall, Gladys Sandoval and Rowynn Slivka.

one," Peacock said.

When students participated in the protest against the dress code, some were dress coded, while others were not.

Scheffel commented on the issue, "With 400 students it's hard to address everything with everyone or to even see things, so I think there are perceived injustices at times."

He explained how what many students may not realize is that the administrator who enforces the dress code may not have even seen them.

Ultimately, most students who participated in the dress code protest did so with the intention of changing some-

thing seen as unjust.

Lee says, "It's unfair, it's sexist, it's biased, and I think it definitely needs to change."

Building Community Amidst Division

Story by Vander Ritchie and Gwen Ramsey

one particular side," said Frazee. "People need to be learning how to understand each other and come to the table with the ability to talk about things and listen."

How we heal that rift is a different and complicated question. However, most seem to agree that we need to put students first. "This classroom is a safe place," said Frazee. "Never in this room has there ever been any divisiveness between students, they accept each other, everybody listens to each other. It doesn't matter how you dress, how you act or what you like, or what you don't like. Everybody gets along."

"I think the common thread, on all sides, is the concern for the safety of students, and that's the common ground I'd like to stand on with people," said Trujillo. "To heal this, and to move

forward and improve, everyone is going to need to bring [authenticity] to the table. We're going to need to be able to acknowledge our own needs, our own areas of potential growth, our strengths and creativity in a real, deeply honest way. If we can do that, [...] we can improve," said Trujillo. "People are just trying to do their best."

"I deeply believe in the abilities and the skills and the talents of every staff member and student here," said Trujillo. "I believe in the goodness that is articulated in the agencies we work with. I am hopeful that we'll be able to use this as a learning experience on all sides, and that it has the starting point for a deeper level of collaboration."



HUDDLE: Salida High School varsity volleyball team huddles up at a home game on October 12th against Manitou Springs. Many varsity athletes have had Coach Hume for all four years of high school and have built lasting relationships through volleyball that they can carry into the rest of their lives.

Club Day Thursdays

Story by Olive Ritchie

In an effort to foster staff and student engagement, Salida High School is creating a weekly club day. Club day is a day where every teacher has a club during lunch/advisory and every student has to go to a club. Principal Talmage Trujillo pushed for this program.

At the beginning of the year, a lot of students asked Trujillo if they could use the advisory/lunch period for clubs. He was told by other staff that this wasn't a new idea; it had been brought up before but never fully developed. The staff then talked as a team and decided to try and make club day work. Trujillo also hopes this program will help connect kids to school.

While his reasons for advocating for club day are not entirely personal, he does hope club

day will help kids avoid feeling disconnected from school, a feeling he said he was acutely acquainted with.

"There were times when I was a student growing up that I felt very disconnected, and being at school was depressing, it was dismal. I dreaded it. Matter of fact, I started ditching school in the 5th grade. Because I wasn't connected to anything, I would just go to the park that I had to cross to get to school, and I would just stay there all day. When I saw the kids coming home from school, I just went home and pretended as though I'd been at school."

Throughout the process of getting club day started, Fred Maxwell has provided an abundance of support. Maxwell and Trujillo both share the same goal of engaging students and staff. They both agree that engagement is vital for students.

"I think engagement for students is opening their eyes to something new that they enjoy doing, and associating that with school. This could allow them time to decompress," said Maxwell. "It gives them an outlet where they

can find new friends, find a new skill, or be exposed to something that engages them in a world of being on your phone all the time, or just being absent a lot of the time. Allowing students a chance to connect and be present during the school day is important to me."

Although there was overwhelming support for club day from the staff, starting club day had its challenges.

"Organization is super tough. We're just trying to roll it out. Teachers are really busy, and this is adding one more thing to their plate. Trying to have an organized roll out without overwhelming anyone, including myself, has been a challenge," said Maxwell.

In spite of the setbacks, Trujillo is hoping that club day will evolve into a successful program.

"We know that whatever we propose is just a first draft, so we are hoping to gather enough information about how it goes so that we can improve it as we go along. At the same time, we want this

first draft to be good enough that it serves the purposes that we've got in mind."

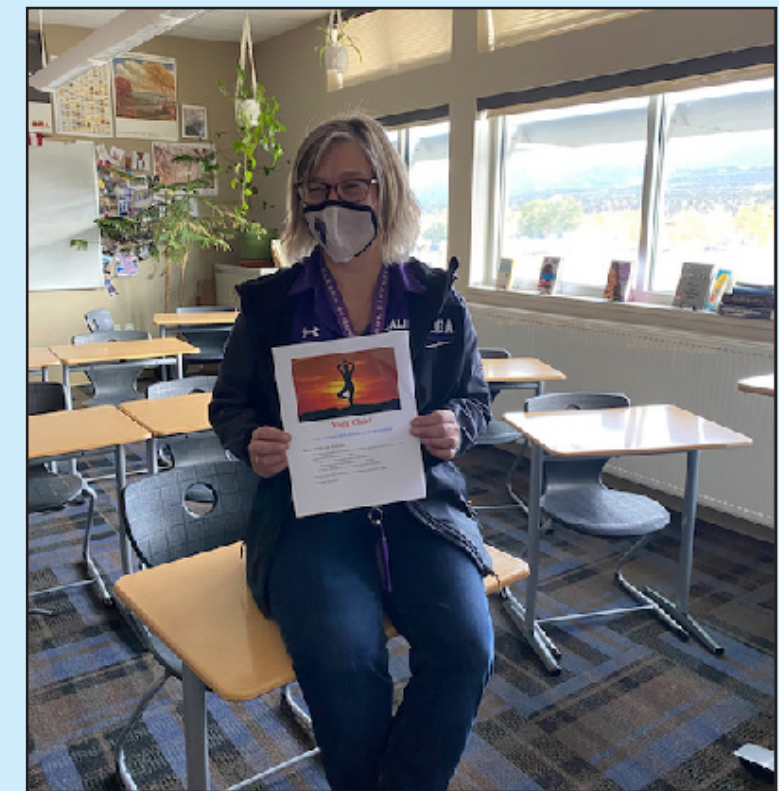
Trujillo hopes club day will eliminate some of the problems with how clubs that run during school currently operate.

"Again, back to the two main objectives: I want to provide time and space for those clubs to meet with all grade levels. If they try to do it during lunch now they cut off half the school. Leaving class to go to clubs is frowned upon by some advisors and encour-

aged by others."

Trujillo believes that if given the opportunity, club day will help improve students' lives.

"My hope is that students will give it a chance. Sometimes it's easier to say we don't care about something than to be truthful and vulnerable and say we do care with the possibility of disappointment. So hopefully students will give it a chance. I deeply believe that if they do, they will find a lot of meaning in that togetherness."



YOGA: English I teacher Britt Searles will be leading a yoga club for interested students during club day on Thursdays.

Coach and Athlete Bonds

"The hardest part for me is seeing my athletes go" reminisced Salida High School's football coach Matthew Luttrell.

Students at Salida High put in a lot of hard work and dedication as athletes every day after their academic schedule. During these practices, they spend many hours with their teammates and coaches that push them to improve their physical ability, mental health, and determination.

Volleyball coach Haley Hume has over seven years of coaching experience with assistant coaches Kelsie Carr and Angie DeLeo by her side. Luttrell has 14 years of coaching under his belt and is partnered with assistant coaches Tim Walker, Mike Gentile, Chris Lake, Randy Kapushion, and John Wallis. With many others, Salida High School has amazing coaches for their student athletes helping them succeed all the way from freshman to senior year.

The connection they build over the years allows for students and coaches to become closer and build community within the sports programs.

Salida coach Haley Hume said, "[My athletes] are so great and it's fun to watch them grow and become stronger women and athletes."

The connection between coaches and athletes is very heartfelt, it's more than just a coach having their athletes show up to practice everyday.

Hume remarked, "Our pow wows are some of my favorite times because I get to see who my athletes are outside of volleyball and what their true passions and aspirations are for life."

Students are able to bond with their coaches from the moment they step foot in Salida High for the first time, to the day they walk across the stage at graduation. Sports at Salida High School are filled with encouraging teammates and coaches that provide a fun, safe, and challenging academic environment.

Senior Hazel Rittmann stated, "I'd describe [my coaches] as tough but fun be-

cause in order for me to have fun while playing I always had to work hard with any of the two sports I played during my time here, though when I joined the volleyball team it felt like a blast compared to the sport I'd played before this. Playing volleyball was definitely the right decision and it's one that I don't think I'll ever regret."

Whether it's inside or outside of school, coaches always have constant care and worry for their athletes. Making sure their hard working athletes are on their feet and stable, on or off the field is a main priority. Football coach Matt Luttrell cares for every one of his football players.

"My expectation is that they become great men. They know I will always have their back when they need it" explained Luttrell.

Story by Makiah Parris

Rift Follows Trujillo's Arrest

Salida High School principal Talmage Trujillo sits at his desk, drumming his fingers on the table, fiddling with the string on his teabag.

"After coming back from my leave, I wasn't sure how I would be received, that trust had been eroded to the point where it would be difficult to do my job," said Trujillo. "But I just felt very welcomed when I came back, there was overwhelming support. I feel like people want me here and want me to do my job. And that makes me happy because even though I'm new, I really like it here."

Trujillo is back from administrative leave following his September 27 arrest. On September 23, Salida High School was placed under emergency lockdown following a call to the police which claimed a Horizons Exploratory Academy student had a gun and was threatening to kill himself and "blow things

up." Police affidavit claims that Trujillo traveled with the student to the Crest Academy, and didn't communicate with police. These actions resulted in Trujillo being charged with several misdemeanor charges. It is important to note that the Salida Schools District's Board, "sees discrepancies between District reviewed accounts and the released police affidavit," read a statement released following a closed executive session.

Within the school, some feel a rift has developed between students and between community members.

"I definitely think the event caused a rift in the school between people that 'support the police' and people that 'side with Trujillo,'" said sophomore Stella Veazey.

That divide has existed for years, only exacerbated by a tumultuous political climate.

"I've been teaching for a long time, 27 years, and in my

career, I wouldn't say I've seen it with divisiveness in general as much. [...] It seems like it's just completely exploded," said art teacher Janine Frazee. "It just seems like there's a lot of hate and a lot of anger. It's concerning."

"I was determined to take that head-on and I addressed it over the intercom, and I just said, 'Hey, this isn't an anti-police campaign and it shouldn't be,'" said Trujillo. "When we put our desire to win over our desire to learn and grow, we fail."

"Either you're for the police, therefore I'm against Trujillo, or you're for Trujillo, and therefore you must be against the police. That's a false dichotomy," said Superintendent David Blackburn.

The rift desperately needs to be healed. "It's really important that both sides are heard, and if opinions are going to be formed around situations, they can't just be from