

Changes show new Ozaukee High principal not content with status quo in student expectations

The start of classes at Ozaukee High School is still several weeks away, but new Principal Jeff Sauer is already making his mark in proposed changes to the student handbook.

The Northern Ozaukee School Board reviewed the changes with Sauer during an informal workshop meeting last week.

The session made it clear Sauer will not be content with maintaining the status quo established by former principal Kevin Parker, who resigned at the end of the last school year.

Gone from the high-school handbook is perhaps Parker's most criticized policy — the provision that assessed students a \$10 fine for missed detentions.

"Students need to realize that the failure to serve detentions will result in the loss of good standing and privileges," Sauer said.

However, board members said the toughening of some other policies are sure to draw reaction in the community.

Sauer dropped a reference to an expectation of "casual business dress" in the section on the dress code.

"In most business settings, blue jeans are not permitted but to expect our kids not to wear jeans is unreasonable," he said.

However, Sauer said the school would strictly enforce a ban on "pants that do not stay up on the waist and expose undergarments." A ban will also be in place on tops that expose the midriff and extremely short shorts, as well as all hats and hoods.

Sauer said a supply of cover-up plain T-shirts and belts would be kept at the school office for offending dressers.

"I expect you are going to have issues here," Board President Paul Krause said. "I fully support it, and maybe it doesn't go far enough, but we are going to hear about it. I don't think this is a small issue in the community."

Sauer said the policy is all about setting expectations for students.

"I am surprised we are talking about this so long. Why would you send your daughter to school dressed like a hooker?" he asked.

Handbook reflects attitude adjustment

Written by MARK JAEGER

Wednesday, 03 August 2011 16:38

Sauer also intends to reinforce the ban on displays of affection in school settings.

“School is not the place for such actions to take place,” the revised policy says, noting that willfully ignoring the rule could lead to suspension.

“Displays of affection is a hot-button issue with staff. This sends the appropriate message that adults not students will determine what is acceptable,” Krause said.

Sauer said setting a policy on electronic devices in school is an evolutionary process, saying eventually the school may have to learn how to integrate personal digital media into the classroom.

Before the devices are fully embraced in the classroom, he said teachers will have to figure out ways to minimize the risk of cheating via texting and camera phones.

Until that time, the school will continue to confiscate cell phones and iPods brought into the classroom without permission. They will be held in the office for three days for a first offense, and returned only to a parent or guardian after subsequent offenses.

Board members balked at a proposal that devices confiscated a fourth time could be donated to a nonprofit organization.

“I think that would be a real mess,” Krause said.

On the topic of technology, Sauer said he plans to discontinue making daily announcements over the school’s public-address system. Instead, information will be sent to

“It will save us time each day. Nobody listens to announcement, anyway,” Sauer said.

He also suggested dropping a policy that gives any student who misses a class 10 times a failing grade.

“That runs counter to what we teach about learning. It is not about just being in the class and putting in the time, it is about learning the material,” Sauer said.

Sauer, who had been the principal at Colby High School, is also the principal at Ozaukee Middle School. He took over the duties of Pam Warner, who retired at the end of the school year.

Many of his recommended changes were mimicked in the middle-school handbook.