

Manchester Essex Debate Team
Mr. Averill

Clarification of Honor Code and Team Policy

Dear Parents and Debaters:

I would like to remind everyone of the rules of the school which all debaters pledge to honor while they are participating on the team. Although the enforcement of the “dress code” of our school has been a bit lax in the past, our failure to meet the code while we are competing is hurting us by making us appear more unprofessional and unpolished than we are.

Our school rule is very clear:

Attire which consists of anything that reveals midriffs, bare backs, cleavage, or underwear is not acceptable. A student may not wear shorts or skirts which are shorter than the length of one’s arm extended at his or her side

At the Emory tournament in 2003, roughly 2% of the students competing showed midriffs. The same is true at Harvard and the District tournament at Milton in March. Even though Manchester Essex students have strong peer pressure to bare their midriffs and show their underwear, most students from other schools are not taking on this competitive disadvantage.

Therefore, at MERHS, if students choose to dress in bare midriff (or a blouse/shirt which does cover entirely), they will have to pay their own entry and judging fees for the tournament. I will enforce the school’s midriff/underwear policy throughout the year. As much as I hate the notion of dictating style (and I do hate the attempt to control people’s right to self expression), I feel that it is unfair to our donors to throw away our entry fees through unprofessional dress.

We all work very hard to make Manchester Essex debate a strong program. We need to do everything in our power to make sure that our dress does not put us at a competitive disadvantage. Thanks for understanding. I am happy to discuss this new policy with everyone on the team.

Sincerely,
Tim Averill