

## *Teen Declaration of Independence*

We the teenagers of Spring Valley High School demand to be freed from the injustices of being a teenager. We feel belittled, used, and just downright unhappy about our current situation. We deserve liberty. We deserve to be heard. And most importantly, we deserve snacks. We deserve more!

- I. We teenagers believe that we should not be required to ask to go to the bathroom. If we need to leave in the middle of an important lecture or homework assignment, that is our choice. And sometimes that happens when it's an emergency! But more often than not, the teacher won't let you go. Although, we do understand that teachers need to know where we are. Therefore, we should continue to sign out like we do but not have to raise our hand and ask. We are 17 years old. We still have to raise our hand to pee.
- II. We are also fed up with having 19 hours of homework a night. How are we expected to function after a full day of school and sports practices and jobs and then homework on top of that? We are not even rested enough to remember to wear socks in the morning let alone take a huge test. We propose that we do not have homework at night. Instead, we could have quizzes on what we learned the day before in class to show that we were paying attention and have acquired the skills that the teacher has taught us.
- III. We do not understand why a girl's wardrobe should depend on what other people say and think. And I say girl because that's who is targeted when it comes to the issue of dress code. We believe that if it's an issue of "distractions" it is not the girls fault. Girls are not just objects that can be "distractions". That is not their fault. On the other hand, we do know that there does need to be some restrictions such as no excessive amounts of midriff showing or short shorts that you can see what color underwear someone is wearing. But all in all, it is the girl's decision on how she wants to portray herself. We also believe that this issue should be more fair. Guys are allowed to prance around in their boots and cutoffs with their nipples hanging out. Obviously we don't think that girls should wear cutoffs like that, but we think disciplining should be more fair and not target certain people. We feel very strongly that something needs to be done about this issue.
- IV. We need to rid the world of What I Need time (W.I.N.). Some of us would much rather take another class or even a college-credit class during that time. I for one, usually end up wasting my W.I.N. time and do not see the benefits. Most kids choose to spend their W.I.N. time in the gym or in the commons talking with friends. For those kids that find it

helpful, we think that that could still be an option. Although, we do not see why it should be required for all students.

- V. Food. People need it to function. Especially teenagers because we're "growing" and need "brain food." If eating healthily and eating enough is so important, then why do we have to wait until 12:30 to eat lunch? Sure we could eat snacks in between classes, in the 8 seconds that they give us. But who has time for that?! If we go from 7:30 to 12:30 without eating, our stomachs start making all sorts of noises. We feel like there are two possible solutions to this problem. Either have an earlier lunch, or allow us to have snacks during class without making it a distraction. If we were allowed to have snacks during class, it would be our responsibility to clean up after ourselves and be smart about what snacks we bring into class.
- VI. We propose that we use a block schedule. If we implemented a block schedule, it would be very beneficial to kids. For example, instead of having that math assignment with 40 impossibly difficult and repetitive questions due tomorrow, it is due in 2 days. That gives you 48 hours to finish it and understand it. We know the class periods could seem pretty long but then you don't have that class the next day. How awesome would it be to know that you don't have to work on proofs for 48 hours? If we did choose to apply block scheduling at our school, we would be responsible for making sure that our homework is completed by the next time we have that class. There would be no excuses for having an uncompleted assignment when we have 2 days to finish it.
- VII. The month of August is an awkward month. It is still technically summer. But at the same time, sports and band and Student Council and all of that jazz starts. Some of you may think, well why not just start school? And to you I say, exactly!! We understand that school cannot technically start until September 1st but if that was changed, school would also get done earlier! Although there is the issue of sports. Spring sports would still be going on when school is out. But if you think about it, in August, sports have already started so what's the difference if we have sports in the spring instead of having sports in the fall that cut into our summer?
- VIII. I am a slow walker. I just am! I always have been, I always will be. I take my time and enjoy the scenery while walking down the halls of Spring Valley High School like a lot of us do. Therefore, we feel like we would benefit from having a longer passing period in between classes. We hate the feeling that we're running late or that we need to hurry. We feel that extending the passing period time by even 2 minutes would be a great help. Everybody looks so frumpy in the hallways... Therefore, we propose that music be played in between classes. The average song is about 3 minutes so if 2 songs are played, you need to get to class before the second song ends. In return for an extended passing

period, we would come up with a playlist consisting of school appropriate songs that each average about 3 minutes in length. We feel like that would really pep up our hallways and make it a much happier atmosphere.

See what we mean? Something needs to be done! All of these injustices, and teachers are worried about people holding hands in the hallway. There are so many bigger issues that need to be solved. We believe that by solving these problems, we can make Spring Valley High School a happier and more fun place to be. Let's face it. We have to be here. Why not make it fun while we can?