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# THE EVOLUTION OF SCHOOL

FROM "READING, 'RITING AND 'RITHMETIC" TO LAPTOPS, IPODS AND MOBILE PHONES.  
GOING BACK TO SCHOOL WILL NEVER BE THE SAME...

**VACATIONS ARE COMING TO AN END** and preparations for a new school year have begun. Over the years those preparations have included gathering school supplies like pencils, rulers and lunch boxes or purchasing one pair of new, all-purpose school shoes. Today, our children are training all summer for their chosen athletic endeavor, buying new batteries for their calculators, charging their laptops and putting their mobile phones on mute.

We asked several Frisco students to give us their thoughts on a variety of subjects related to school like the technical gadgets kids take to class, the pros and cons of school uniforms and recognizing cheerleaders as athletes. Their contribution to Frisco STYLE Magazine's Back to School issue gives us an opportunity to experience their perspective and be proud of the next generation.

In his usual endearing and entertaining fashion, Bob Warren has contributed his memories from school in the early days, having graduated from Frisco High School in 1938. He visited with fellow graduates who attended rural one and two room schools with multiple grade levels and shares their memories.

Reflect on your school days and what devices, school clothes and activities were popular. While many things have changed dramatically, others remain, at the core, similar. Enjoy and listen for the bell.

## The Technical Invasion

By Liz Stewart

**DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS** technological advances have greatly transformed student life. During the kindergarten days, young kids made use of crayons and No. 2 pencils, but now high schoolers cannot leave the house without their iPods, thumbnails, CD players, laptops, Game Boys, and the most important one of all; their cell phones.

Since these new and improved

technological developments were introduced, teenagers can't go anywhere without them, including to school. As a teenager myself, I can remember the rules we had during the innocent days; no CD players, no Game Boys, and especially no cell phones in school. However, in today's world, you don't go to school without seeing someone on their cell or walking around with strings attached to their ears. Today, teenagers will go to the trouble of wearing a jacket with a hood in the middle of spring, just so they can listen to their favorite song.

Now that the new, hottest toy has been made available, you don't see anyone without it. Yes, I'm talking about the iPod. You see them on the streets, in cars, in gyms, and our favorite, in schools. I mean, who wouldn't want this remarkable device, where 1,000 songs can be stored and you can go anywhere with it. You see kids walking down the hall everyday with them wrapped around their head even though they're really not suppose to have them in school, but it's the

new coolest thing. Some disadvantages of having an iPod at school are having it stolen, lost, or confiscated by a teacher. Because this product is so expensive, it's sometimes wiser to leave them in your car, locker or at home.

Another new advanced appliance is the laptop computer. When you walk into school you always see at least one person with one. Students use this device to write their English paper or to search for information needed in a class. Laptops are useful when you go off to college but now it seems like they are coming in handy in the high schools as well. An advantage of having a laptop is that you don't have to wait for the limited number of computers available in some schools. However, a negative of having a laptop at school is breaking an exceptionally expensive device, it being



stolen, or using it in an inappropriate manner.

Now that schools have computers everywhere you go, kids like to carry around their thumbnails. This is a new device that kids use while using the computer. This device allows you to hold more information and it plugs into the back of your hard drive. One benefit is that you can carry this new apparatus around your finger because it is so small. In the past you had to tote around a zip disk or a floppy disk but now you can hook a tiny little device on your backpack or around your finger. One drawback of having a thumbnail is that students forget to remove it from the computer or it might not be compatible with all software.

During the school year students like to bring their CD players to listen to music on the long bus rides to games or home—it's just another opportunity to listen to your favorite

music. CD players seem to be a popular appliance because kids love music. Everywhere you go you see kids listening to the radio, exercising with their Walkman, and listening to their favorite jams before playing a big game. Some disadvantages of taking a CD player to school are that it can be stolen; you don't pay attention in school, leave it at school, or get it taken up because of inappropriate music.

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"Everyday teenagers use their picture phones to take pictures of their new clothes..."

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Included on the list of more and more devices that students love to bring to school, the calculator is another. Even though students might not like what the calculator does because it involves dealing with education, students can't go to math class without it. As we all know, in the past students didn't have calculators and they had to do everything by hand. Being a high school student, I am glad that I live in this generation where we have improved technology. Having a calculator makes schoolwork easier and faster for math and science classes. It is also required in most schools to have a calculator to use.

I have saved my favorite topic for last. It is the most valuable device of them all, and teenagers can't leave the house without them. This device has to be the famous cell phone. Teenagers are constantly on their cells, and parents, you know this because your phone bill was off the charts last month! Some students carry around cell phones in case of emergency, in order to have contact with your family, and to talk to your friends. Now phone manufacturers have created mobile phones that have cameras built inside of them.

Everyday teenagers use their picture phones to take pictures of their new clothes or to take pictures of their friends throughout the school year. They have also developed text

messaging, in which kids can write a note to a friend or ask them a simple question about homework or the weekend. A disadvantage of having a cell phone in school is that they are prohibited in most schools. Another shortcoming of having a cell is if you forget to turn off the ringer you might disturb your teachers lecture. In all probability you would either lose it or be asked to turn it off.

Now that I have listed some very important devices, you now know that technology has come a very long way from what it used to be. However, some of these devices are not allowed in school, but students still use them. Although some of these appliances might not be considered a necessity for school, students must have them to get through an eight-hour day. As long as new technological devices are being invented, teenagers are going to want the new hottest things because they are new, entertaining and useful.

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*Liz Stewart will be a senior at Prosper High School.*

## To Conform with a Uniform or Not

By Desiree Altman

**IMAGINE:** Frisco ISD adopts school uniforms for the 2005-2006 school year. Who is cringing at the

thought? Who is feeling relief? This can be a heated topic for students, parents and administrators. I'm simply here to express my opinion on the topic at the risk of alienating myself from peers during my senior year!

I love fashion just as much as the next person. I like looking nice and feeling nice. It's fun to put together the "perfect" outfit, wearing it and feeling good about how I look. However, between attending school full-time, taking AP classes, taking a dual-credit course and working part-time I just don't have the time or patience anymore to deal with the dilemma of "What am I going to wear to school tomorrow?" Then on top of it all, I have to make sure that it complies with the district dress code. Who needs this? Some mornings I wake up and think, "If we had school uniforms, I could go back to sleep for another half hour or so."

I know. I know. It sounds crazy that any teenager would be in favor of a school uniform! But honestly, as I approach adulthood, being able to decide what I wear to school seems trivial to me anymore. The dress codes have gotten so strict that it doesn't truly allow for individuality anyway. Real life is about making sure I have enough money from my paycheck to make my car payment and insurance premium. My senior year would be a whole lot easier if I could just throw on a pair of khakis and a polo shirt every morning. Besides, I have the rest of my



life to be a fashion diva.

Some might think that it's unfair to dictate what a person should have to wear. I can understand that. However, when I consider the topic more in-depth, I have to wonder why high school seems to be a place where people are so focused on what you bought where, and by the way, how much did it cost? Is this individuality? Or is this caving in to sly marketing practices? I think your personality should determine your individuality. By not being able to wear the clothing you want because of school dress code certainly doesn't prevent a person from developing their own unique personality.

School uniforms can also be a good choice from a financial aspect. Not all parents can afford to buy their teens designer label clothing. A teen whose parents can't afford the "latest," can also have a burden placed on them socially at school simply because they aren't wearing the "cool" thing. When everybody wears the same standard outfit, it allows all students to start school on a level playing field. It reduces the likelihood of students judging one another because of what they are wearing.

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"...I have to wonder why high school seems to be a place where people are so focused on what you bought where..."

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"Was he really sagging that much?" "Her skirt wasn't that short!" "Our dress code is so stupid!" This is the kind of conversation that goes on every time a student comes in with the infamous red and white "Dress for Success" sweat suit that Centennial High School issues to dress code violators. Consequently, it is a disruption when the students get sent to the office for their violation, and also when they return, clad in their bright red sweat suit. Not only would having a standard uniform reduce

the chances that students would be wearing something out of dress code (such as torn pants or skirts that do not extend past their fingertips), but it would also reduce the amount of traffic that dress code violators create in the office.

Homecoming and Prom would be so much more special if the district decided on school uniforms. Half the fun of these events is being able to choose your outfit and make sure that nobody else is wearing the same thing as you. If students were not always allowed to choose what they are going to wear to school everyday, then it would make them appreciate that privilege much more.

Honestly, the only downside I can see to having a school uniform would be that wearing the same outfit everyday has the potential to get boring after a few months. However, there are always the weekends and the extra half hour of sleep each night seems worth it.

There is always the option of expressing yourself with accessories that are in style right now. Many different kinds of jewelry are fashionable and if there are not any restrictions on what style of shoes students are allowed to wear, it is possible to either dress up with nice shoes or dress down with cool sneakers. As long as all of the decision-making privileges are not taken away, there is always room to personalize even a very simple uniform to express your own style.

In the past, fashion has changed from being very strict and structured to a freer and flowing stage and back again. Our generation does not really have a style of its own, after all, why come up with something unique when we can simply copy other decades? Clothing that is in style now is all over the board. Corset style tank tops and dresses are very stylish right now and they date all the way back to the Victorian age, when women wouldn't dare go out without their trusty corset. Also, accessories such as oversized sunglasses and colorful pumps are coming back from the sixties, gold is coming back from the eighties in the form of shoes, bags,



*Frisco Cheerleader Mallory Gebbie  
photo by Chris Johnson*

jewelry and belts.

Sometimes I have to question the drama that so often surrounds the school uniform debate, I'm young but in another year I will be an adult. I'll be starting college and before I know it, I will be establishing a career, just like everybody else. No matter where I go in life there will always be a "standard" of appropriate attire. Let's face it, there's a certain way to dress for work, school, the ballgame, and swimming. Perhaps school uniforms really just prepare students for the real world. We can't always wear what we want, when we want, just because it's comfortable or makes us feel good!

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*Desiree Altman will be a senior at Centennial High School.*

# Cheering for Today's Team

By Mallory Gebbie

CHEERLEADING SEEMS AS though it is changing constantly. Bigger and better dance moves, stunts, tumbling and spirit. But in the past 30 years it has changed phenomenally.

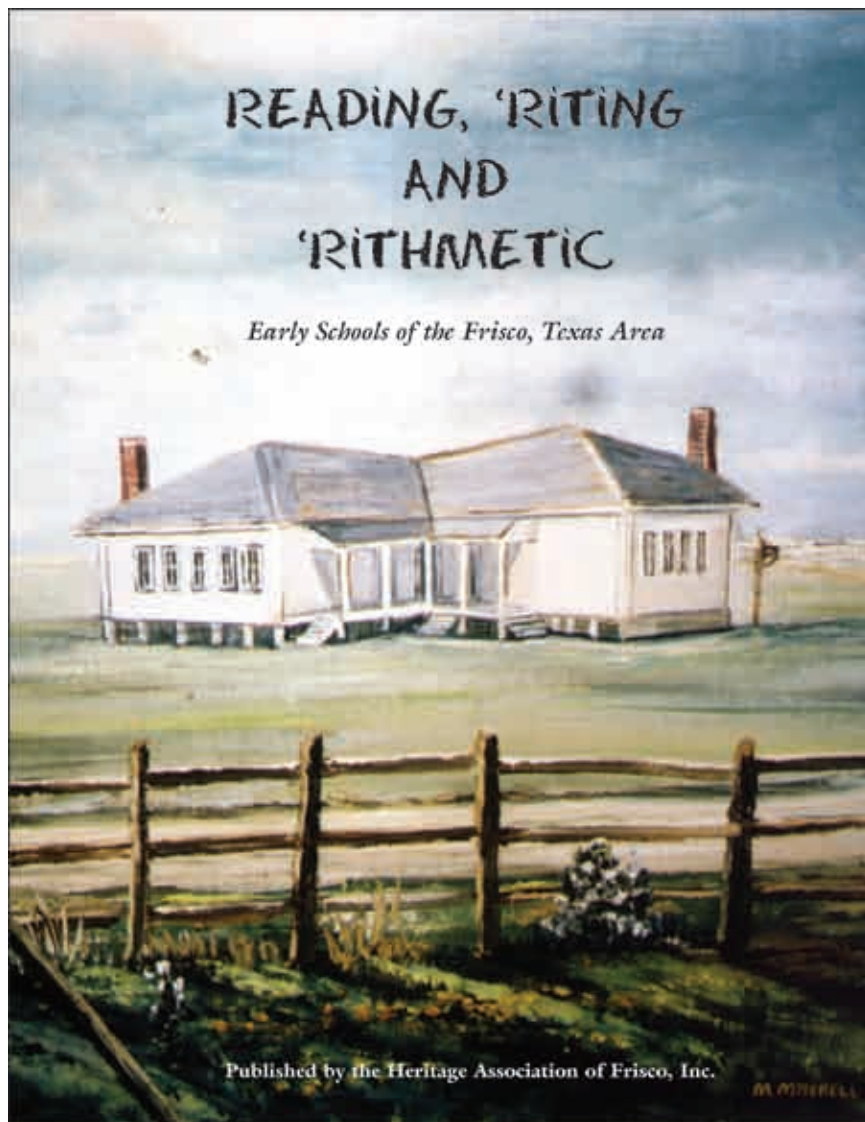
Back in the 50s cheerleading was all about the poodle skirts and cardigan sweater sets, but now cheerleading is considered a huge competitive sport featured on ESPN.

Cheering now has multiple dimensions that many people, if not involved in the sport, don't know about. To master the objectives, these gymnasts and athletes have to train many hours a week to get it right, to get that one bid to nationals or hear that roar from the fans in the stands.

Not only has the athleticism changed over the years, but the outfits have changed as well. Cheerleaders back then wore long skirts, pigtails, and saddle shoes, and carried watermelon-size pom-poms--not any more. Now, girls get cheerleading uniforms that move the easiest, are the flashiest and look the best under stadium lights. As for pigtails and saddle shoes, those things of the past have all graduated on to hairpieces with curls, glitter and lightweight custom-made cheer shoes.

Although change is good, some disadvantages and advantages come with it. With all of these new ways of dancing, and stunting and tumbling, people can get hurt easily, dance moves can get too provocative and girls can get dropped. On the other hand, the advantage of these changes is the adrenaline rush of trying to throw that girl a little higher, counting how many back hand springs you can do and making up a new dance move just for your squad. Those things are what make cheerleading, cheerleading. And, it wouldn't be what it is today if it weren't for those pioneers who started it all in the first place.

So it doesn't matter what kind of



Cover of "Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic"

provided by the Heritage Association of Frisco

uniforms we have on or how our hair is done, just that we know cheerleaders will forever and always be the girls and guys that keep spirits alive for generations to come.

*Mallory Gebbie will be a senior at Frisco High School.*

## Life In Early-Day Schools

By Bob Warren

"READING, 'RITING AND 'RITHMETIC" – A book by that name is being published by the Heritage Association of Frisco, and will be for

sale late this year. It tells of life in seventeen or more one and two-room schools that dotted the Frisco area in the early to mid 1900s. A County School Superintendent supervised these rural schools.

You might wonder, as I did, how in the world one teacher could possibly teach forty or more students in grades one through seven--all in one room! To find the answer to that and other questions, I asked a few "experts" who taught, or were pupils in these schools.

I asked Ruth Borchardt, now ninety-nine years young, what her school day was like. Ruth not only attended a one-room school called Erudia, but later taught in the three-room Hackberry school. She remembered

school starting at 9:00 am and ending at 4:00 pm. The teacher ringing a hand bell signaled the opening and closing of school. Then there was recess, a time when the children poured out onto the playground to romp and play games. Some schools even had a seesaw or a merry-go-round. As morning and afternoon recesses ended, the same bell called reluctant students to line up and march back to class.

Looking inside a typical one-room school, we would find a big classroom full of kids ranging from age six or seven to fourteen. The building was heated in the winter by "one big old stove" fired by coal or wood. On warm days the only cooling was from open windows. We would also see rows of

old-fashioned school desks – the kind that had a seat attached to the desk behind it.

Teachers usually taught one class at a time, occasionally combining two classes for certain subjects. So, I asked how they managed to keep order in the groups not being taught at the moment. Teachers and students alike assured me that discipline in the classroom was seldom a problem. However, Lois Cates, a student at Lebanon, remembers having to stand in the corner of the classroom facing the chalkboard – probably for talking when she was supposed to be studying. Wilma Fisher, long-time Frisco ISD teacher who began her career in a one-room school, said she maintained

order in her classroom by keeping six grades busy with pre-assigned studies while she taught the one remaining grade.

Though discipline was strict, some rules were more lax than today. Bill Cates attended Rowlett, a two-room school where his dog, Poochie, went with him every day. The dog stayed quietly under his master's desk, going outside only when Bill did. Both Bill and Poochie had perfect attendance records one year, and Poochie was so popular they put his picture in the school annual.

School supplies were simple - a pencil, tablet and a new jar of paste – the kind that tasted good. First graders concentrated on reading, writing and



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All-school photo from "Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic"

provided by the Heritage Association of Frisco

spelling. Thelma Griffin, who attended a one-room school, recalls reading about exciting characters such as Baby Ray or Dick and Jane. Many early grades studied spelling all week then had a little fun with a spelling bee on Friday. But writing class was "plain boring." Kids practiced "push pulls and ovals" by the hour learning to write longhand. Studies in higher grades included English, math, health, geography, history and additional reading and spelling. The quality of education in most rural schools was good. Lois remembers that students who finished seventh grade at Lebanon before moving on to area high schools were on par with those who had always been in the larger schools.

Erudia school was located about two miles north of old downtown Frisco, built on land owned by Beverly Rogers, donated "for as long as it was used for a school." The building, like most of that day's one-room schools, was a long wooden structure with windows on only one side. Ruth Borchartd said that in 1918 when her family, the McCormick's, moved back to the Frisco area after a stay in west Texas,

she, a brother and a sister enrolled at Erudia. Adding three new students in one day was quite an event for the little school. Ruth was one of four in the sixth grade, and the other six grades were equally small. The teacher was Miss Hogue, a McKinney resident who roomed just across the road with the Smith family. The Smiths not only furnished a home away from home

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"School supplies were simple - a pencil, tablet and a new jar of paste--the kind that tasted good."

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for the teacher, but the school's daily bucket of water was carried from their house. Everyone drank from a common dipper until someone decided it would be more sanitary if each student brought his or her own cup.

What about lunch? Most of the rural

schools had no lunch facilities, so students brought lunch from home. Thelma Griffin said her mother made her "a lot of potted meat sandwiches." Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches were a popular dessert. Ruth remembers that she and her siblings brought all three of their lunches in one big syrup bucket. The school's roof once caught fire, and when someone hollered, "Fire!" Ruth's sister ran out with her books, her brother grabbed his cap, while Ruth rescued the family lunch bucket. Priorities? The fire was soon extinguished and classes resumed.

I asked Bill Cates how he got to Rowlett School. He said, "I walked - it wasn't much more than a mile." Most students lived within a mile or two of their schools, so walking was very common. The Whitsell family sometimes rode a mule to school, while a few older students rode horses.

Rural areas had only dirt roads - dusty in the summer but muddy during much of the school year. Even after the "city schools" like Frisco and McKinney got busses (about 1940),



"Poochie"

provided by Bob Warren

rural schools had none. However, Lois Cates recalls the luxury of riding a Frisco bus to and from Lebanon School – except when the roads were too muddy for the bus – then she had to walk. The McCormick kids usually walked to Erudia, but Ruth remembers one rainy day when her Dad was taking them to school on a horse. While crossing a wooden bridge, the horse

slipped and fell. Although no one was hurt, Ruth was afraid to get back on the horse, so she walked the rest of the way.

I asked what children wore to school, and Ruth said, "They didn't wear their Sunday clothes, nor did they wear their every-day clothes. It was something in between, perhaps last year's Sunday dress." Thelma said her mother sewed and made all her dresses – school, every-day and Sunday.

With no running water available, there were no inside restroom facilities in country schools. Each school had, in opposite corners of its playground, outhouses – one for the girls and the other for boys. Students were encouraged to wait until morning and afternoon recesses to use the restroom, but those who couldn't wait raised their hand, signaling their need by holding up either one or two fingers.

Was hygiene a problem in school? In the days before homes in this area had bathtubs, most everyone took one bath per week in a number three washtub – on Saturday, "so folks usually smelled better on Monday than on Friday." It sometimes got pretty rank when the students had to gather around the hot stove to keep warm. Once when the teacher was promoting hygiene and

more frequent bathing, one boy said, "Well, I go swimming in the summer."

Most teachers in these early schools did not have a degree. They went to college one year, got a teacher's certificate and continued their education in the summer months. Ruth Borchardt taught, and was janitor, at Hackberry for \$80.00 per month. In winter months she came early each morning to build a fire in the stove, so one year she was rewarded with a \$45.00 bonus – the unused amount in that year's budget.

Wilma Fisher, at age nineteen, started teaching after completing one year of college. She said, "My pay the first year was \$85.00 per month for seven months, but for that I did the school's programs, was principal, teacher and janitor." One year her school ran out of money a month before the year's end, so the county said, "Shut it down." Wilma just could not bring herself to close the school prematurely, so she finished the school year without pay. That's just how things were done in those days.

This is only a thumbnail sketch of life in the Frisco area early-day schools. For the full story, be sure and get your copy of The Heritage Association's book, "Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic" when it is published this fall. It will be well worth your read!

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*Frisco native Bob Warren is a humorist, historian and former Frisco mayor.*