

## **Maria Montessori Academy Policy: Student Dress Code Policy Adopted: July 21, 2025**

### Purpose

Maria Montessori Academy (the “School”) is concerned with the inner development of the child’s mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being. Therefore, we seek to limit undue focus on external appearances. Betiwyn Holcombe, a Montessori expert, best expresses the School’s dress code philosophy: “A child who wants to shine needs to focus on shining from their mind, not from what he or she puts on their body.”

This approach aligns with the Montessori principle of the *prepared environment*—a space intentionally designed to minimize distractions and support purposeful work. Just as the materials in the classroom offer *control of error*, allowing children to self-correct and grow independently, a thoughtful dress code helps create a calm, focused environment that supports self-discipline and respect for oneself and others.

By limiting distractions and encouraging simplicity, we aim to foster a community where students can focus on learning, collaboration, and inner growth.

### Policy

Student appearance is expected to reflect the School’s college/workforce prep image. Clothing, shoes, hair, accessories, and bodies must be clean and must not be distracting or cause safety concerns. Any deviations from the items listed below must be approved by administration.

**\* Dress Code is enforced Monday-Friday. Dress Down days will be announced at the discretion of Director.**

### **Tops**

- Color: Any solid color or appropriate patterns.
- Styles: Uniform polos, blouses, plain or patterned t-shirts, button down shirts and flannels.
- Layering: Sweaters, pullovers, vests, and sweatshirts may be worn and must comply with small logos (less than 2”) and appropriate patterns.
- School Pride T-Shirt: May be worn any day of the week. For school safety, teachers may require all students to wear the school shirt on field trips.

## Outerwear

Outerwear is defined as anything worn over the standardized dress, such as, but not limited to, hoodies, jackets and coats. Students are allowed to wear solid colored hoodies, as long as the hoods remain off their heads indoors, in addition to college hoodies (which may have the college's lettering, logo, and/or graphic), military hoodies (branch must be the primary logo), and School-themed hoodies (hoodies issued by the School). Nothing offensive on outerwear is allowed, such as offensive images, sayings, artwork, music groups, etc.

## Bottoms

- Color: Any solid color or appropriate pattern.
- Material: Cotton, twill, corduroy, denim.
- Style: Plain, pleated, cargo; no sagging, ripped or baggy pants.
- Skirts/jumpers/shorts: Pleated or straight; hemlines should fall below fingertips when arms are extended down sides of body. Leggings/shorts must be worn with skirts/dresses.
- Tights/hose/leggings: Solid colors only; leggings may be worn by themselves as long as the color and material(s) are solid and non-see through.

## Shoes

- All elementary students need to have a soft sole shoe/slipper that must be worn at all times while in the building. The slipper needs to be free from logos, lettering, graphics, sparkles, sheen, decorative accents, and characters. \*Note: a small pattern is acceptable.
- Junior high students are not required to have slippers.
- Heeled shoes are not appropriate for a typical school day. Students should wear clean, closed-toe shoes that allow for safe, active movement throughout the day.
  - Heely's are not permitted.

## Accessories/Hair

- Hairstyles and hair accessories are expected to be non-distracting and out of a student's eyes.
- Jewelry and other accessories are limited to wristwatches and non-distracting earrings.
- Hats or hoods will be worn outdoors only, and in the manner for which it was designed for.

**Not Allowed**

- Visible tattoos
- Large logos or graphic designs
- Large or noisy jewelry
- Bandanas, feathers, or scarves used as accessories
- Open-toed shoes, Heelys, or shoes with excessive decoration
- Spaghetti straps or bare midriffs when raising arms or sitting
- Clothing that is frayed, torn, stained, or has holes

The School reserves the right to determine whether a student's attire is distracting or inconsistent with the values of the Montessori prepared environment. Final decisions will be made at the discretion of the Director.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Nancy Lindeman, Board Chair

Date

