

Dress Code: The way we dress often reflects our feelings and attitudes. Modesty and appropriateness in dress are part of reflecting God's image and help ensure we avoid clothing that may cause embarrassment, distraction, or temptation for ourselves and others.

Over the years, there has been some understandable frustration regarding the OCCS dress code policy, particularly when two students may wear similar clothing, yet one is considered in violation while the other is not. While this can seem unfair at times, it reflects the beautiful reality that God has created each student uniquely. Differences such as height, body proportions, and stages of development all impact how clothing fits and appears.

We believe this diversity is a reflection of God's handiwork—each student is wonderfully made, a true masterpiece of our Lord. As we approach the topic of dress code, we encourage everyone to shift the focus from what may feel "fair" to what reflects *respect*, *modesty*, and our shared Christian values. While personal style and comfort are important, our appearance should also represent our Christian witness and align with our Foundation Statement, which reminds us that **“Every child is created in the image of God; education should nurture their understanding of their privilege and responsibility as a disciple of Jesus Christ.”**

As part of the OCCS mission to *partner with parents*, we will be placing greater responsibility on families to uphold the dress code. We know how important it is to you to guide your child in making choices that reflect both their faith and their responsibility as part of our school community. We also understand the social pressures students face, particularly in middle school, and we want to avoid embarrassment.

Moving forward, if clothing does not align with the dress code, we will handle the situation discreetly. Parents will be notified of the concern and we hope this will resolve further issues. However, if the issue continues, the student will be notified discreetly and if the student has an appropriate alternative available and chooses to change, the issue will be resolved without further action. If no alternative is available, we will contact the parents to bring a change of clothing. We ask that appropriate clothing be brought to school within one hour of notification to minimize disruption to the student's day.

Our goal is not to create unnecessary obstacles but to foster a respectful, modest environment that reflects our faith and values. We encourage parents to take a moment each morning to ensure their child's attire aligns with school expectations. Please keep in mind that clothing should fit appropriately not only when a student is standing or sitting, but also when moving, reaching, or bending over. We recognize that summer and school clothing may differ, even in similar weather conditions, and appreciate your attention to details.

A shortened version of the dress code is included for your reference. Please keep in mind that due to the unique nature of each student, clothing may fit or appear differently from one student to another, and the policy requires discernment and partnership.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the policy further, please reach out. We are grateful to work together to help our students grow, flourish, and honor the Lord through every aspect of their lives—including how they present themselves.

Respectfully,
Diane Krommendyk
Director of Learning

OCCS Dress Code

Clothing

- Must be clean and modest: no bare midriffs, low necklines, bare backs, or overly short/tight clothing.
- Straps must be at least three fingers wide (no spaghetti straps or tank tops).
- Leggings/yoga pants must be worn with a long top that covers the backside.
- Shorts allowed in Aug–Oct and Mar–May. For grades 5–8, shorts must go below fingertips when arms are at sides (5 inch inseam is suggested).
- No ripped/torn clothing above the knee.
- Wording/images must be appropriate (no sexual content, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or non-Christian values).

Appearance

- Hair should be neat and natural in color; no extreme styles or disruptive makeup.
- Shoes must not leave black marks.
- Hats/caps not allowed indoors (unless approved for IEP/504 or special events).

Biblical Foundation

In keeping with our belief that rejecting one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person (Gen. 1:26–27), students may not wear clothing at school or school activities that deliberately presents a gender other than their biological sex at birth.

Enforcement

- Staff/administration will decide if clothing is inappropriate.
- Parents may be asked to bring a change of clothes.
- Repeat violations may result in disciplinary action.