

**NOVATO CHARTER SCHOOL  
DRESS CODE POLICY**

**I. PURPOSE**

- A. To define acceptable apparel and personal grooming at Novato Charter School.
- B. To define enforceable standards of apparel and personal grooming.
- C. To define procedures to be followed should the enforceable standards be violated.

**II. AUTHORITY**

- A. First Amendment and Fourteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution; the California State Constitution

**III. BACKGROUND**

- A. This policy has been developed after extensive comment from Faculty, Parents, Middle School Students and the Board of Trustees.
- B. The Novato Charter School makes every effort to support students to develop an awareness of self, based on an inner knowing of personal beauty, and discourages the development of a false sense of self based on media, commercial, sexist or racist influences. Support and cooperation of all parents are requested to encourage moderation in clothing and personal grooming for the sake of creating an atmosphere conducive to learning. In an effort to create a healthy working and learning environment at school, students are expected to wear clothing that is clean, simple and in good repair. Clothing and shoes should be suitable for both indoor and outdoor activities. Simplicity and appropriateness should be major considerations.
- C. School administrators may prohibit clearly-specified types of clothing or accessories it reasonably believes lead to disruption of the School's educational environment, to foster a safe, non-violent atmosphere (*Jeglin v. San Jacinto Unified Sch. Dist.* (C.D. Cal.1993) 827 F.Supp. 1459, 1460-1461).
- D. Public school students have free speech rights under the First Amendment of the Federal Constitution and also under the California Constitution. The Fourteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution also provides the rights to liberty. These rights do not disappear once the student enters school grounds.

#### IV. DEFINITIONS

A. **Media** means any of the following:

- References to television shows and characters.
- References to movie & video characters.
- References to popular consumer products.

#### V. POLICY

##### **Recommended Apparel:**

The Novato Charter School discourages the use of clothing with media advertisement, cartoon images or slogans, and commercial logos of any kind. The use of makeup, fingernail polish, hair dye, tattoos, and heavy jewelry is discouraged.

In an effort to create a productive working and learning environment at school, students are expected to wear clothing that is clean, simple and in good repair. Excessively loose (baggy) or tight clothing is not allowed.

Children need comfortable, practical, flat-soled shoes that are firmly attached to their feet. Shoes are to be free of lights and wheels. Toes and heels should be covered to allow the freedom to safely run, play and climb. Crocs, boots (Uggs, cowboy, etc.) and dress shoes, limit mobility and can be unsafe. 8<sup>th</sup> Graders are allowed to wear open-toed shoes, including flip-flops, provided they bring athletic footwear to school for daily movement.

Extreme hairstyles and dyed hair are strongly discouraged for all students, and are definitely inappropriate in grades K-6. Hair should not hang in the eyes: students should either tie hair back from the face or trim bangs accordingly.

##### **The following are enforceable standards:**

- A. Clothing and accessories (e.g., backpacks, lunch boxes) marked with references to drugs, alcohol, racism, sexism or violence are prohibited.

- B. Skirts/shorts/dresses should be a horizontal hand (student's own hand) above the knee or longer. Horizontal hand measurement applies to any outer garments worn regardless of tights or leggings underneath the skirt/shorts/dress.
- B. 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students: Leggings, Jeggings, Yoga/Athletic pant wear can be worn as an under layer for modesty or warmth. The outer layer (skirt, shorts, sweater, dress, etc.) must come down to the longest finger when arms are straight down alongside the body. Students may remove the outer layer for Movement Class. Leggings must not be see-through.
- D. Strapless dresses, tube tops, low-cut tops, spaghetti straps that do or could expose cleavage, see-through tops without a modest camisole and midriff tops are considered to be improper school attire and are therefore prohibited. Undergarments should not be visible, straps included. Tank top straps shall be equal or wider in width than the combined width of the index and middle fingers of the student wearing the tank top. For the purposes of measurement, the fingers of either the right or left hand shall be placed over the tank top straps and if the two fingers fully cover any of the straps, then the tank top strap width shall be deemed too narrow. Attire that exposes undergarments, midriff and/or buttocks is prohibited.
- E. Excessive or extreme jewelry or accessories, e.g., dangling chains, spiked bracelets, large earrings are prohibited.

## **VI. PROCEDURE/ Enforcement**

- A. The Director and the class teachers shall monitor the dress standards at the Novato Charter School in accordance with the Dress Code Policy. The Director and class teachers may counsel students with reference to the Dress Code Policy.
- B. If a student is found to be in violation of the enforceable standards of this policy, the Director or teacher may take action in the following successive steps:
  - 1. Speak to a student privately – suitable, alternative clothing may be provided by the school.
  - 2. Call a student's parents to provide a change of clothing.
  - 3. Issue a Behavior report.
  - 4. Meet with a student and his/her parents.
  - 5. Suspend a student.
- C. Should any questions of attire and personal grooming arise that are not addressed in this Policy, determination will be made at the discretion of the Director or designee.