

PURPOSE: To allow seniors to decorate their mortarboards for graduation.

INTRODUCED BY: Morgan Smith

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE SENATE:

SECTION ONE (REASONING):

The MSMS Pledge states, “I promise to each member of the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science to do my best to uphold the ideals of Scholarship, Service, Creativity, and Community.” This isn’t just a set of words; it’s a commitment every student and faculty member has made — a commitment to uphold the very values that define MSMS. To truly honor the ideal of creativity, students should be allowed to express themselves by decorating their graduation caps.

Creativity is woven into the fabric of our school’s identity. It’s why we don’t adhere to a strict uniform policy but instead are encouraged to reflect our individuality through personal style. It’s why our art department thrives as a space where students can develop and showcase their talents. Allowing cap decoration at graduation would be an extension of this culture, giving students a platform to celebrate their personal journeys, cultural identities, and future ambitions. MSMS has nurtured our creative spirit in countless ways; allowing us to carry that spirit into such a significant moment would be a fitting conclusion to our time here.

SECTION TWO (APPENDIX):

The following forms would be used by administration to ensure students behave respectfully and responsibly in the process of decorating their mortarboards:

MSMS Mortarboard Design Form

All students must submit this form, regardless of if they intend to decorate their cap.

Do you intend to decorate your mortarboard/graduation cap?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please sketch and describe your design on the following page, keeping the following guidelines in mind:

1. Decoration may not extend more than an inch in height from the cap.
2. Decoration may not include any political content or hate speech.
3. Decoration may not include any flags.
4. Decoration may not contain any harmful or inappropriate language or imagery.
5. Decoration may not contain any reference to drugs or alcohol.
6. Decoration may not include any accomplishments or titles that would traditionally be represented by cords.
7. Decoration should not make noise.
8. Decoration should not hang from the mortarboard.
9. Decorations must be firmly affixed to mortarboard.
10. Decorations may not include confetti, loose glitter, or anything that gives off a strong aroma.
11. Decoration may include intended college, career, or military path.

Students may not decorate the caps they purchase through the school's graduation gear form. However, they may buy a secondary cap (royal blue only) from a separate entity and decorate that one instead.

All mortarboard designs must be submitted to administration by April 1. If a student wishes to make significant changes to their design after receiving approval, they must re-submit this form and receive approval before the deadline. Minor stylistic changes will not require re-approval, so long as no guidelines are broken in the process. Minor changes may include differences in intended color, usage of decorations, etc. but may not include alterations in content or text.

If a student's decorated cap is not approved on the day of graduation for any reason, they will need to have the spare with them to walk in. If these instructions are not followed appropriately and a student shows up with an unapproved cap and no backup, they will not be permitted to walk for graduation. Please sign below to certify you understand and agree to these conditions.

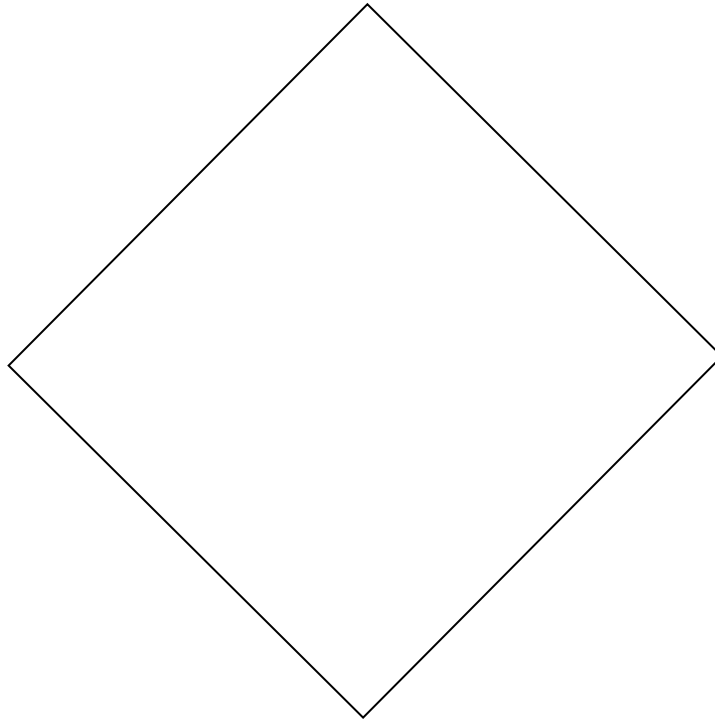
Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Describe design/transcribe text:

Please list **ALL** materials you will use to decorate your mortarboard:

Sketch design:



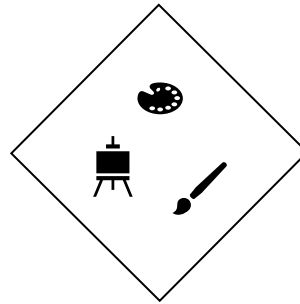
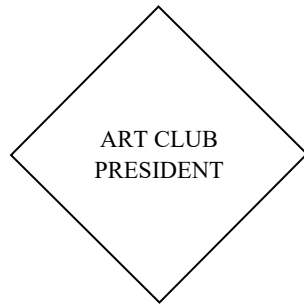
If you intend to decorate your cap, please make a copy of this form for your records before submitting it to ensure you can accurately follow the sketch and design you provided.

Admin Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ * Date: _____

**Parents must also email sholmes@themsms.org with explicit approval of their child's design (with a brief description) and an acknowledgement that if their child alters their approved design without re-approval, they will not be permitted to walk at graduation. They should email through their school-provided email address.*

Dos & Don'ts for Graduation Cap Decorations



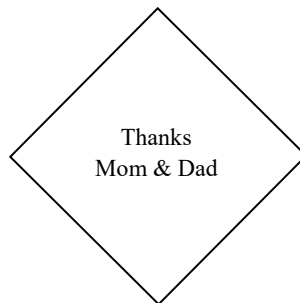
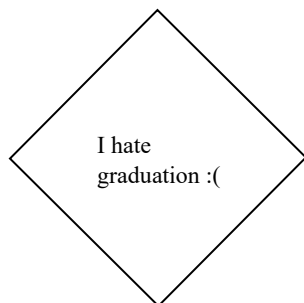
Don't: Write officer positions / titles on your cap.

Do: Include a picture of club-related symbols to represent your involvement.



Don't: Allow decorations to extend past the edge of the cap.

Do: Keep decorations confined to the surface of the mortarboard.



Don't: Include hateful messages on your cap.

Do: Express gratitude and include positive messages :)

MSMS Mortarboard Final Approval Form

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Students must print out a photocopy of their finished cap to be approved and signed by an administrator and their parent/guardian before the day of graduation. Photos must be clear with easily identifiable design elements. Color photos are preferred. To walk with their decorated cap, students must bring this form, their signed photo, and the cap they intend to wear to graduation rehearsal, where their cap will be held until graduation to ensure no changes are made prohibiting the student from walking. Students must label the inside of their caps with their full name to prevent any possible ownership disputes.

Additional Logistical Information:

Mr. Snyder has agreed to handle the process of taking up caps at graduation rehearsal, checking to make sure they are identical to the signed photos, then handing them back out on the day of the event.

Administration should email out the forms shown earlier in this document with specific dates as to when students should submit their designs for initial and final approval.

Initial designs will be approved or denied by a selection committee of juniors. Administration will choose the students that should participate, and at least one administrator should be present while they judge designs. The identities of these students should be kept confidential.

SECTION THREE (RESPONSES):

“Since I'm a part of the really small group of people that get to decorate the caps, I would appreciate it if others got to decorate theirs as well.” – Iysiahs York, MSMS Alum and Former President of ISA

“As a school, we pride ourselves on providing a different way to do high school. I think it would make a lot of sense to allow students to display their individuality at graduation in accordance with that.” – Lee Faul, MSMS Senior and ISA Secretary

“I fully believe at MSMS, especially at the point of graduation, not only have we gained the maturity to be able to follow rules and guidelines efficiently, but we have been expressing the four ideals of MSMS: Scholarship, Service, Community and Creativity. I feel as if it only makes sense to fully embrace all these ideals that make MSMS the great school it is as we graduate.” – Cratin Quinnelly, Senior Class Secretary

“Creativity is one of the four MSMS ideals for a good reason. Innovation and self-expression are at the heart of what makes MSMS a great place to be. Decorating one's graduation cap is a traditional senior activity that I believe falls in line with MSMS's ideals. While I support our freedom to celebrate the end of a wonderful high school journey, I acknowledge MSMS's unique position creates restrictions which should be carefully navigated.” – Andy Chen, Senior Class President

“I believe that as creatives at MSMS, we should have the freedom to customize parts of our graduation attire. It would make this experience more memorable.” – Angelle Pierre, MSMS Junior

SECTION THREE (SIGNATURES):

By signing this petition, we are acknowledging our support for Senator Smith's resolution allowing seniors to decorate their graduation caps.

Name	Date	Name	Date
Eden Zmitrovich	1/31	Minh Nguyen	1/31
Vanessa Coon	1/31	Rebecca Lee	1/31
Finley	1/31	Deborah Stommt	1/31
Edmund de J.	1/31	Nolan Clarke	1/31
Dee	1/31	Yule Lin	1/31
LaDe Chambers	1/31	Aryn Hurrell	1/31
Van B...	1/31	Tenea Smith	01-31-25
Trinity Martin	1-31	Ruoxin Lin	01-31-25
A. B...	1/31	Jared Cecil	1-31
Samuel	1/31	Logan Lachner	
Joy Rame	1/31	Larrison Ober	1/31
Naomi C. Simpson	02-03	Thaddeus Ciesielski-Gilbert	02-03
Rebecca	02-03	Jennifer Bui	02/03/25
Griffin East	2/3	Tenea Smith	02/03-25
Henry Henry Brown	2-2/3	Max Thompson	2/3/25
Isabella Givens	2/3	Max	2/3/25
Miriyga Thurman	02/03/25	Max	
Bri Froter	02/03/25	Max	2/3/25

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Name	Date	Name	Date
Anya Klein	1/28/25	Lago Logan Masal	1/30/25
Angelle Jean-Pierre	1/28/25	India Miller	1/30/25
Syrena Shorcut	1/28/25	Jacob Heister	1/30/25
Demmyas Flores	1/28/25	Ria Jr	1/30/25
M. Williams	1/28/25	Caitin Quindt	1/30/25
Alex Williams	01.28.2025	WADIE FAREWELL	1/30/25
Eli Bankston	1/28/25	Jack Kirkland	1/30/25
Jaielyn Bryant	1/28/25	Danica Babin	1/30/25
M. Scott	1/28/25	Yuma General	jan 30, 25
Brian	1/28/25	Brayden White	1/30/25
Lee Favi	1/28/25	Chahel Beckman	1/30/25
Deela Rosa	1/28/25	Stacy Jones	1/30/25
Nathalie Yang	1/28/25	Alonso Bocanegra	1/30/25
Maliyah Mitchell	1/28/25	Poppa Bowling	1/30/25
Bekah Grace Carter	01/30/25	Lilly Adcock	1/31/25
Samuel Wang	1/30/25	Liz Brittain	1/31/25
Alexis Hill	1/30/25	Ryus	1/31/25
Auisen Knieps	1/30/25	Danica Branc	1/31/25

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[illegible]