

Hazing

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school district, disruptive of the educational process, and prohibited at all times.

II. Definition

“Hazing” means any action or activity that endangers the health or safety of a person for the purpose of initiation, admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a student organization or activity, including membership of any athletic team. The term shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Any type of physical abuse such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, or placing a harmful substance on the body.
2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics, or other activity that subjects the student to a risk or harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
3. Any activity involving the ingestion or consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
4. Any morally degrading or humiliating game, prank, stunt, practical joke or other activity that (a) intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism; (b) subjects the student to stress, embarrassment, or shame; and/or (c) adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.
5. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.

III. Applicability of Policy

- A. No student, teacher, administrator, coach, volunteer, contractor, or other person affiliated with the school district by employment or otherwise shall plan, direct, encourage, aid, engage, condone, or permit hazing. Apparent permission or consent by a person who is the victim of hazing will not avoid the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- B. The Superintendent or designee will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any person who is found to have violated this policy.
- C. For the purposes of student discipline, the Board of Education considers hazing to be seriously disruptive to the educational process whether or not it occurs during the school day.

IV. Reporting/Investigative Procedures

- A. Individuals who believe that they have been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing, shall report the alleged acts immediately to the appropriate school official so that the incident can be properly investigated and appropriate action can be taken, including immediate notification of the Superintendent of Schools.
- B. At the building level, the principal is the person responsible for receiving reports of hazing. In the case of athletic teams, the report may be made to the coach of the team, the Director of Athletics, the school nurse, or the school administration. Any person may report hazing directly to the Superintendent.
- C. Teachers, administrators, volunteers, coaches, and other persons employee or affiliated with the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events, which might include hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute hazing, shall immediately inform the appropriate school official, as outlined in Section B (above).
- D. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, work assignments, or participation in school activities.

V. School District Action

- A. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, the Superintendent shall undertake or authorize an investigation by the school district.
- B. Pending completion of a hazing investigation, the school administration may, at its discretion, take immediate steps to protect the complainant, reporter, students, or other persons involved.
- C. Upon completion of the investigation, the school administration may take appropriate action if necessary. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, detention, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, termination of employment in the case of staff, and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

VI. Reprisal

The Superintendent will take appropriate action, including disciplinary action, in the event of retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged hazing or who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such hazing. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

VII. Dissemination

This policy shall appear in all parent-student handbooks and staff handbooks.