

HAZING

The Board of Education prohibits acts of hazing. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Hazing, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment; and since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior, treat others with civility and respect, and refuse to tolerate hazing.

The Board of Education believes hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and the Board prohibits all such hazing behavior at any time on school premises, at any school-sponsored function or on any school bus.

"Hazing" means the performance of any act or the coercion of another to perform any act of initiation into any class, team, or organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

The district prohibits active and passive support for hazing. All staff members, pupils and school volunteers shall be alert to possible behavior, circumstances, or events that might include hazing. A person who detects hazing and/or planned hazing shall immediately inform the pupil(s) involved of the prohibition against this behavior and/or conduct and direct them to immediately cease all such behavior and/or conduct. All such incidents must be reported to the Building Principal.

The Building Principal will report to the Affirmative Action Officer and the Superintendent any incident reported from a staff member, pupil, parent, legal guardian or any other source. The Building Principal will also report information received from anonymous sources, however, any formal disciplinary action will not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

There will be no reprisals or retaliation against any person(s) making such report of hazing behavior. Any allegations of reprisals or retaliation shall be reported directly to the Building Principal who will investigate such allegations and take appropriate action if the allegations are confirmed and/or if the person is found to have falsely accused another as means of retaliation or as a means of hazing.

The Building Principal or designee will immediately investigate any report of actual or planned hazing.

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If the investigation determines hazing behavior was planned or was present, or that there were incidences of active or passive support for hazing, the administration will take reasonable, age-appropriate and effective corrective action to end the behavior which may include, but is not limited to, counseling, warning, and/or disciplinary action. The administration may need to provide support services to the pupil(s) that was hazed to remedy the past hazing behavior.

Nothing in this Policy prohibits the Affirmative Action Officer from complying with the requirements of the district's Affirmative Action Program as outlined in Policy 1550 and N.J.A.C. 6:4-1.1 et seq.

The Building Principal, in conjunction with the Affirmative Action Officer will develop and conduct training and information programs for all school staff, pupils, parents and interested community members on the district's Hazing Policy.

Any pupil organization that seeks to organize and perpetuate itself by taking in members based on the decision of the membership of the organization, rather than from the free choice of any pupils who are otherwise qualified to fill the special aims of such organization, is prohibited.

This Policy shall be published in pupil and staff handbooks upon its adoption by the Board. The Board will seek school community input prior to the initial adoption and any revisions to this Policy.

N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq.; 18A:42-5; 18A:42-6

Cross Reference: Policy Guide No. 5841

Adopted: June 19, 2003