

ANTI HAZING POLICY

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe learning environment for students and staff that is free from hazing and that promotes respect, civility, and dignity. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District and are prohibited at all times. Moreover, it is the policy of the District that no student or adult will participate in or be members of any secret fraternity, sorority, athletic team, club or organization that is in any way related to the school or to a school district activity which engages in any form of hazing.

II. General Policy Statements

- A. No student, teacher, coach, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the District shall permit, condone or tolerate hazing.
- B. No student, teacher, coach, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the District shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing.
- C. The District strictly prohibits students from engaging individually or collectively in any form of hazing or related initiation activity on school property, in connection with any school activity or involving any person associated with the school, regardless of where it occurs.
- D. Consistent with the District's Code of Conduct, any student who participates in hazing or related initiation activity will face immediate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, exclusion, and loss of the privilege of participation in extracurricular activities.
- E. Students who participate in hazing may also be referred to appropriate law enforcement authorities and may face subsequent criminal prosecution.
- F. Consent is no defense to a charge of hazing. Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions or penalties contained herein.
- G. This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property, and during, before and after school hours.

III. Definitions

A. "Hazing" means intentionally or recklessly committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization whether school sponsored or not, or for any other purpose. The term hazing includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, paddling, electronic shocking or placing a harmful substance on the body.
2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to extreme weather conditions, confinement in a restricted area, excessive calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
3. Any activity involving the 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 activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school, such as morally degrading or humiliating games, pranks, stunts, practical jokes or any other activities that make a student the object of amusement, ridicule, embarrassment, humiliation or intimidation.
5. Requiring personal servitude.
6. Requiring students to wear uncomfortable, ridiculous, or embarrassing clothing or underclothing and/or causing indecent exposure or any other gross and lewd behavior involving nudity.
7. Requiring students to participate in acts of vandalism, theft, assault, sexual acts or other criminal activity.

8. Subjecting an individual to cruel or unusual psychological conditions for any reason.
 9. Compelling an individual to participate in any activity which is perverse, publicly indecent, contrary to the individual's genuine moral or religious beliefs or contrary to the rules, policies, and regulations of the District.
 10. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation or state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.
- B. "Student organization" means a group, club or organization having students as its primary members or participants. It includes grade levels, classes, teams, activities or particular school events. A student organization does not have to be an official school organization to come within the terms of this definition.
- C. The terms "hazing" and "related initiation activity" do not include the ordinary physical activity of customary athletic events, tryouts, intramural activities, or other similar student contests or competitions.
- D. Superintendent will develop guidelines as to the following:
1. Totality of the circumstances in determining whether a particular activity constitutes hazing and warrants discipline under this policy.
 2. Reporting Requirements to appropriate administrative personnel.

IV. School District Action

- A. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, the District shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials or a third party designated by the District. The District may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students, or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.
- B. Upon completion of the investigation, the District will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, reporting to local police authorities, transfer, remediation, termination or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of

applicable collective bargaining agreements, applicable State and Federal statutes, District policies and regulations.

- C. The District will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, coach, paraprofessional, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged hazing or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person 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.

V. Policy Dissemination

This policy shall be published in student, parent, and employee handbooks, the District Code of Conduct and/or other appropriate school publications as directed by the Superintendent.

In addition, each principal, athletic coach and all other extracurricular advisors and supervisors shall inform his/her students about this policy at the beginning of each school year, and prior to the beginning of each team or group's activities for the year. Each student participating in extracurricular activities shall be required to sign a written statement of his/her awareness of this policy as a condition for participation.

Legal Ref: NYS Penal Law §§120.16 – 120.17