

## **SUBJECT: HAZING**

### Definitions

Hazing means any action taken or situation created that causes, or is reasonably likely to cause harassment, bodily danger or physical harm, severe mental or emotional harm, extreme embarrassment or ridicule, or personal degradation or loss of dignity to any student or other person associated with the school.

Consent is no defense to hazing: i.e., the implied or expressed consent of a person or persons to hazing shall not be a defense to discipline under this policy.

“Related initiation activity” means any method of initiation, pre-initiation, or other activity required as a condition of initial or continued membership in a school club, team or organization, that causes or is reasonably likely to cause, bodily danger or physical harm, severe mental or emotional harm, extreme embarrassment or ridicule, or personal degradation or loss of dignity to any student or other person associated with the school.

The terms “hazing” and “related initiation activity” do not include customary, school-sponsored athletic events, intramural activities, or other similar school-sponsored student contests or competitions.

“Conspire to engage in hazing” means to plan, encourage, fail to take reasonable steps to prevent, or fail to report hazing and related initiation activities, prohibited by this policy.

### Prohibited Conduct

Activities that may be construed as hazing under this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any act that involves physical brutality or physical aggression that causes, or is reasonably likely to cause, bodily danger or physical harm to an individual;
- Any act that involves forced consumption of food, alcohol, drugs, or other substance, or any other forced physical activity that could severely affect the physical health or safety of an individual;
- Any act that would subject an individual to extreme mental stress, mental stress, or emotional harm, or any other forced activity that could severely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

Consistent with the District’s Safe and Orderly Schools and Sexual Harassment policies, school officials will examine the totality of the circumstances in determining whether a particular activity constitutes hazing and warrants discipline under this policy. As a general test, students and school officials should consider the following questions in determining an activity could be prohibited under this policy:

- Is the activity an educational experience?
- Does the activity promote or confirm to the values of the school?
- Will the activity increase the respect for the school and the individuals participating?
- Do current and new or prospective members participate together equally in the activity?
- Would students and/or faculty be willing to allow parents, community members, school officials, or the press to witness the activity?
- Would students and/or faculty be able to defend the activity in a court of law?
- Does the activity have value in and of itself?

### Examples

Many different types of activities can be considered hazing. Although not intended as an exhaustive list, the following list provides examples of specific misconduct that may be considered hazing under this policy as an informational and educational tool for students, parents and educators.

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- Any activity that involves brutality of physical nature and that a reasonable person could foresee would bring physical harm to an individual, such as whipping, beating, branding, electric shocking, paddling, tying, taping, or otherwise restraining an individual against his or her will, excessive calisthenics, or exposure to the elements;
- Any activity that unreasonably interferes with a student's academic efforts by causing exhaustion, sleep deprivation, or loss of reasonable study time;
- Morally degrading or humiliating games, pranks, stunts, practical jokes or any other activities that make an individual the object of amusement, shame, embarrassment, or intimidation;
- Forcing or coercing the consumption of alcohol, drugs, foreign or unusual foods, or any other substance that endangers the mental or physical health of an individual;
- Throwing or applying whipped cream, shaving cream, toothpaste, paint, honey, eggs or other foods or substances on an individual's body;
- Requiring personal servitude;
- Harassment such as pushing, shoving, cursing, shouting, and yelling;
- Requiring an individual to participate in acts of vandalism, theft, assault, sexual acts, or other criminal activity;
- Causing indecent exposure or any other gross or lewd behavior involving nudity;
- Subjecting an individual to extreme mental stress, or to cruel or unusual psychological conditions for any reason;
- Compelling an individual to participate in any activity that is illegal, perverse publicly indecent, or contrary to the individual's genuine moral or religious beliefs or contrary to the rules, policies, and regulations of the School District.

**Reporting Requirement**

School personnel who become aware of hazing or related initiation activity shall report such incident immediately to the principal or superintendent so that the incident can be promptly investigated and so that appropriate action can be taken.

School employees who become aware of hazing and fail to report it to the principal or superintendent may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. In addition, the failure of teachers, counselors, administrators, and other school employees who hold professional certificates to report, constitutes an unprofessional practice and may cause the employee's professional certificate to be suspended or revoked by the State.

Students who observe hazing and fail to intervene or report the hazing to school officials may face disciplinary action, and prosecution, for conspiring to engage in hazing.

**Policy Dissemination**

A summary of this policy shall be posted in a prominent place in each District school. The policy shall also be published in student registration materials, student, parent, and employee handbooks, and other appropriate school publications as directed by the Superintendent.

Each District principal, athletic coach, cheerleading advisor, and other extracurricular supervisor shall inform his/her students about this policy on a regular basis. At a minimum, such communication shall take place 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 athletics, cheerleading, student government, clubs, music programs, and other extracurricular activities shall be required to submit the written statement of commitment attached to this policy as a condition of participation.

The coach, advisor, or supervisor responsible for the particular programs shall keep all statements of commitment on file for the duration of the current school year.

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**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have been informed by my \_\_\_\_\_  
*(student name)* *(name of principal/coach/advisor)*

Mr./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ of the District policy prohibiting hazing and initiation. As a condition of my participation on \_\_\_\_\_, I agree to abide by this policy and refrain  
*(name of team, club or group)*  
from hazing or related initiation activity of any kind. I understand that my involvement in any hazing or initiation will subject me to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include suspension, expulsion, exclusion, transfer to a different school, and/or loss of participation in all extracurricular activities, as well as referral to law enforcement authorities.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date