

Policy

HARRASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING AND HAZING

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

“Harassment” means repeated unprovoked aggressive behaviors of a physical or psychological nature, carried out against an individual or a group of individuals that results in harm or injury to the individual or the group. To be considered harassment, the behavior must be unwelcomed by the recipient and have the effect of creating a hostile environment.

“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.

“Harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or hazing” also means any gesture, verbal or physical act taking place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of harming a pupil, damaging the pupil’s property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his person, damage to his property or has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school’s educational mission or the education of any pupil.

All staff members, pupils and school volunteers shall be alert to possible behavior, circumstances, or events that might include harassment, intimidation, bullying and hazing. A person who detects harassment, planned harassment, intimidation, planned intimidation, bullying, planned bullying, 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 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 harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or hazing behavior. Any allegations of reprisals or retaliation shall be reported directly to the Building Principal or designee, 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 harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or hazing.

A school employee who promptly reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or hazing to the Building Principal, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:37.1 et seq./P.L. 2002 Chapter

83, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.

The Affirmative Action Officer will immediately investigate any report of actual or planned harassment, intimidation, bullying or hazing. The Building Principal, at the discretion of the Affirmative Action Officer, may assist the Affirmative Action Officer in the investigation. If the investigation determines harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or hazing behavior was planned or was present, 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 harassed, intimidated, bullied and/or hazed, which may include, but is not limited to, counseling, re-taking a course, tutoring and/or other services to the pupil(s) to remedy the past harassing, intimidating, bullying and/or hazing behavior.

The Affirmative Action Officer will develop and conduct training and information programs, in conjunction with Building Principals and support staff supervisors, for all school staff, pupils, parents and interested community members on the district's Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying and 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 forwarded to the County Superintendent of Schools and published in pupil and staff handbooks upon its adoption by the Board.

Adopted: July 2003
Readopted: May 19, 2008

Legal References: N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq. Discipline of Pupils
 N.J.S.A. 18A:42-5, 6
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Cross Reference: 2224 Affirmative Action Policy
 2224, Affirmative Action Regulation
 4119.23 Smoking, Drinking and Use of Drugs on School Premises
 Policy
 4211 Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring Policy
 4211.1 Affirmative Action / Nondiscrimination Policy
 5131 Conduct / Discipline Policy
 5131.7 Weapons and Dangerous Instruments Policy
 5141.6 Crisis Intervention Policy
 5145.4 Equal Educational Opportunity Policy
 5145.51 Sexual Harassment Policy
 6121 Affirmative Action (Pupil) Policy
 5141.4 Child Abuse and Neglect (Policy and Regulation)