

Loogootee Community Schools Criminal Gang Activity Policy

It is the policy of the Loogootee Community School Corporation to prohibit gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior on school property or school buses or at school-sponsored functions. Furthermore, It is the policy of the Loogootee Community School Corporation to prohibit reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders, or others with reliable information about an act of gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior.

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Criminal Gang means a group with at least three (3) members that specifically:

- a. Promotes, sponsors, or assists in: or
- b. Participates in: or requires as a condition of membership or continued membership: the commission of a felony or an act that would be a felony if committed by an adult or the offense of battery, or
- c. Knowingly or intentionally/actively participates in a criminal gang, or knowingly or intentionally solicits, recruits, entices or intimidates others into joining a criminal gang.

Per IC 20-33-9-10.5, a school employee shall report any incidence of suspected criminal gang activity, criminal gang intimidation, or criminal gang recruitment to the principal or the school safety specialist. The principal and/or the school safety specialist may take appropriate action to maintain a safe and secure school environment, including providing appropriate intervention services.

Any school employee who promptly reports an incident of suspected gang activity and who makes this report in compliance with the guidelines of this policy, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.

Loogootee Community Schools feels it is important to provide student and family support services for a student suspected of participating in gang activity. The recommendations for those services are located in the Student and Family Support Service Guidelines of this policy. Loogootee Community Schools will collaborate with community stakeholders for recommendations concerning criminal gang prevention and intervention services and programs for students that maximize community participation and the use of federal funding. The recommendations are located in the Support Services Guidelines of this policy.

The superintendent of the school corporation shall annually disseminate this policy to all parents who have children enrolled in a school within the school corporation. The superintendent shall ensure that notice of the corporation policy appears in the student handbooks. Any administrative guidelines that accompany this policy will be noted on the school website and will be available in the Superintendent's Office upon request.

Guidelines for Investigating and Reporting Suspected Gang Activity

The principal or designee shall conduct a thorough and complete investigation for each report of suspected gang activity. The investigation shall be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee within one school day of the report of the incident. The principal may appoint additional personnel and request the assistance of law enforcement to assist in the investigation for the administrator's safety. The investigation shall be completed and the written findings submitted to the principal as soon as possible, but not later than five school days from the date of the report of the alleged incident of criminal gang activity.

The principal shall submit the report to the superintendent of the school corporation within ten (10) school days of the completion of the investigation. The superintendent or his/her designee shall report the results of each investigation to the board of education on a quarterly basis during regularly scheduled board meetings.

Each school within the school corporation shall record the number of investigations disposed of internally and the number of cases referred to local law enforcement, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, and gender. Each school shall report this information to the school corporation superintendent who shall submit a written report to the Indiana Department of Education by June 2 of each year.

The principal shall provide the parents of the students who are parties to any investigation with information about the investigation, in accordance with Federal and State law and regulation. The information to be provided to parents includes the nature of the investigation, whether the corporation found evidence of criminal gang activity, and whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the activity. This information is to be provided in an expedited manner.

The superintendent of the school corporation is authorized to define the range of ways in which school staff and the principal or the principal's designee shall respond once an incident of criminal gang activity is confirmed, according to the parameters described in the corporation's code of student conduct. The school board recognizes that some acts of gang activity may be isolated incidents requiring that the school officials respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious that they require a response either at the school corporation level or by local law enforcement officials. Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who engages in gang activity may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Guidelines for Prevention, Intervention, and Support Services

Prevention and Intervention Service

The following prevention and intervention services provided by Loogootee Community Schools may include but are not limited to:

1. Providing training for staff and teachers on gang prevention and intervention resources within a jurisdiction on a periodic basis. The gang awareness information should be revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in gang activity.
2. Creating a formalized collaboration plan between local school administration and community based prevention and intervention providers (possibly using the existing County Safe School Commissions as points of contact). The formalized collaborations should make effective, coordinated, and maximized use of federal funding a priority.
3. Coordinating resources and funding opportunities support gang prevention/intervention activities.
4. Integrating specific gang related training into the curriculum.

Student and Family Support Service

The following family and support services provided by Loogootee Community Schools may include but are not limited to:

1. Gang awareness education (for students, parents, school faculty/personnel, law enforcement, and community stakeholders) that at the least shows promise of effectiveness based on research. The gang awareness education information should be revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in gang and gang-like activity.
1. Culturally and/or linguistically appropriate services/supports for parents and families.
2. Counseling coupled with mentoring for students and their families.
3. Community and faith-based organizations and civic groups.
4. Viable, sustainable after-school programs developed in collaboration with other stakeholders.
5. Job training and employment opportunities as both a deterrent to gang involvement and an incentive to leave gang involvement.
6. School sanctioned/facilitated extra-curricular activities.

ADOPTED: May 16, 2016