

GANG ACTIVITY OR ASSOCIATION

I. GENERALLY

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) acknowledges the existence of gangs in the community and the threat they pose to the health and welfare of students. In addition, gangs erode the ability of all members of the school community to enjoy a safe and welcoming educational environment. Therefore, students may not engage in gang activity on school grounds, on school buses, at bus stops, or at any school-sponsored activity. In addition, students may not engage in gang activity while using the ACPS computer system, as defined in Policy GAB/IIBEA: *Responsible Computer System Use*, at any time.

In addition to students who are subject to corrective actions for Code of Conduct violations, ACPS also supports students through the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework with specific prevention and intervention strategies for those who are:

- Identified as being in a gang; and/or
- Impacted by gang activity.

II. DEFINITIONS

Bullying means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. "Bullying" includes, but is not limited to verbal or electronic communication such as cyber bullying, or a physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, age, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Disruptive behavior is defined by Va. Code § 22.1-276.01 as a violation of School Board policies or regulations governing student conduct that interrupts or obstructs the learning environment.

Gang: Any group of three or more persons:

- Whose purpose includes the commission of one or more criminal activities;
- Which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol; and
- Whose members individually or collectively have engaged in the commission of, attempt to commit, conspiracy to commit, or solicitation of two or more previous criminal acts, at least one of which is an act of violence (Va. Code § 18.2-46.1).

Gang activity:

- Wearing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other thing that is evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang;

- Committing any act, or using any speech, either verbal or non-verbal (such as gestures, hand signs, handshakes, graffiti) showing membership or affiliation in a gang;
- Using any speech or committing any act in furtherance of the interests of any gang, including:
 - soliciting, recruiting, hazing and initiating others for membership in any gang;
 - requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person;
 - committing any other illegal act or other violation of school policy and inciting other students to act with physical violence. This includes online speech if it substantially disrupts the learning environment; and
- Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, degradation, disgrace and/or related activities, including inappropriate congregating, that are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or mental harm to students, employees or visitors.

III. COLLABORATION, REPORTING AND REVIEW

The Superintendent or designee collaborates, at least quarterly, with:

- principals and administrators,
- the Director of Safety and Security Services (SSOs);
- the Director of Student Services;
- local law enforcement (including School Resource Officers (SROs));
- local Juvenile agencies;
- the City of Alexandria Gang Task Force; and
- community groups focused on gang prevention activities

to coordinate efforts and share information on recent gang activity, known gangs and their affiliated methods of verbal and nonverbal communication, recruitment methods, identified members, etc.

The Superintendent and Chief of the Alexandria Police Department also meet at least annually to coordinate efforts to support students who are vulnerable to gang activity and recruitment.

The Superintendent will annually provide to the School Board the prior school year's data reflecting all occurrences of documented gang activity for each school in the Division. The report will include disaggregated, demographic data for the students involved in the Code of Conduct violations, as well as the resulting administrative responses or consequences issued, including any referrals to law enforcement. (The report will not include personally identifiable information regarding students.)

IV. TRAINING

ACPS provides in-service training in gang behavior and characteristics to facilitate staff identification of students who are vulnerable to gang activity and recruitment and to promote membership in authorized school groups and/or activities as an alternative.

Adopted: December 5, 1996
Amended: June 18, 1998
Amended: June 15, 2004
Amended: December 18, 2014
Amended: December 16, 2021

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, as amended, §§ 18.2-46.1, 22.1-70, 22.1-78, 22.1-79(2),
22.1-276.01, 22.1-279.6.

Cross Refs: GAB/IIBEA Responsible Computer System Use
 GAC-R ACPS Social Media Regulations
 JFC Student Conduct