



## VILLA MARIA ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL

EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN SINCE 1872

### **Hazing Policy**

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment that is free from hazing for students and staff members. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the philosophy, mission, and educational goals of Villa Maria Academy and are prohibited at all times.

#### **General Statement of Policy:**

- No student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing.
- No student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer shall permit, condone or tolerate hazing.
- Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law to initiate a student into a student organization shall be subject to disciplinary consequences.
- A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act.
- This policy applies to hazing behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours.
- The school will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer who is found to have violated this policy.

#### **Definitions:**

"Hazing," means 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, or for any other purpose. The term "hazing" includes, but is not limited to:

- Any type of physical brutality or placing a harmful substance on the body.
- Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.

"**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.

### **Reporting Procedures:**

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy.

Any person may report hazing to the Principal and/or the Dean of Students.

Teachers, administrators, other school employees as well as contractors and volunteers shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events that might include hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall inform the Principal and/ or Dean of Students immediately.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

### **School Action:**

Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, Villa Maria Academy shall undertake or authorize an investigation.

The school may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.

Upon completion of the investigation, the school will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension or dismissal from the student organization, and/ or suspension or expulsion the school.

**Reprisal:**

The school will take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other employee of the school, or any contractor or volunteer who retaliates against anyone who makes a good faith report of hazing, or who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation or hearing about a hazing incident. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

**Dissemination of Policy:**

This policy shall appear on the website and in the *Student Handbook*, *Faculty Handbook* and the *Athletic Handbook*; it will also be issued to all attendees of the first meeting of the school year of each student organization (including all athletic teams and clubs) who will sign that they have been informed of the school's hazing policy and understand their obligation to abide by the school's policy.

Modified from *Hazing Policy*, National Federation State High School Associations, 2015  
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