

CODE F4
(REQUIRED)

POLICY ON NONDISCRIMINATORY MASCOTS AND SCHOOL BRANDING

Statement of Policy

It is the policy of LNSU to provide welcoming, positive, and inclusive learning environments for all students by prohibiting the use of discriminatory school branding, which undermines the educational experiences of members of all communities and perpetuates negative stereotypes.

Definitions

1. **“School”** means a public school or an independent school approved under section 166 of Title 16.
2. **“School board”** or **“Board”** means the board of directors or other governing body of an educational institution when referring to an independent school.
3. **“School branding”** means any name, symbol, or image used by a school as a mascot, nickname, logo, letterhead, team name, slogan, motto, or other identifier.

Administrative Responsibilities

The superintendent or designee shall:

1. periodically review and provide recommendations for necessary updates to the nondiscriminatory school branding policy as necessary;
2. assist the school board in its review of the district’s school branding to ensure compliance with the policy following any school branding changes or updates to the policy;
3. assist the school board in ensuring the prohibition of school branding that directly or indirectly references or stereotypes the likeness, features, symbols, traditions, or other characteristics that are specific to either:
 - a. the race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity of any person or group of persons; or
 - b. any person, group of persons, or organization associated with the repression of others;
4. Develop a procedure for an individual to file a complaint that an element of school branding is in violation of the policy.

Complaints

An individual may request an opportunity to appear before the Board for purposes of presenting the complaint, relevant facts, and further explanations. The board shall hear the complaint in a fair and just manner. The Board shall render a decision within 45 days of the hearing, which must include a summary of facts and basis for the decision.

If the individual is unsatisfied with the Board's decision, the individual may appeal the decision to the Secretary of Education. Appeals shall be filed within 30 days of the school board's decision by sending a written notice of appeal to the Agency of Education.

<i>VSBA Review Date</i>	<i>August 15, 2022</i>
<i>Date Warned</i>	<i>December 5, 2022</i>
<i>Date Adopted</i>	<i>December 19, 2022</i>
<i>Legal References</i>	<i>16 V.S.A. § 568</i>
<i>Cross References</i>	<i>District Equity Policy</i>

DISCLAIMER: This model policy has been prepared by the Vermont School Boards Association for the sole and exclusive use of VSBA members, as a resource to assist member school boards with their policy development. School Districts should consult with legal counsel and revise model policies to address local facts and circumstances prior to adoption, unless the model policy states otherwise. VSBA continually makes revisions based on school districts' needs and local, state and federal laws, regulations and court decisions, and other relevant education activity.