

## 5512.01 HAZING

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

Hazing is a process, based on tradition that is used by groups to maintain a hierarchy (i.e., a pecking order) within the group. Regardless of consent, the rituals require individuals to engage in activities that are physically and psychologically stressful. These activities can be humiliating, demeaning, intimidating and exhausting, all of which results in physical or emotional discomfort. Hazing involves group dynamics and proving one's worthiness to become a member of a specific group. The newcomer, or victim, is hazed. Once accepted by the group, the victim becomes a bystander and watches others get hazed. Eventually, the bystander typically achieves senior status and power, and becomes a perpetrator of hazing (Lipkins, 2006).

*Notwithstanding any other provision of Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to a prosecution under the Act.*

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

The Building Principal or designee will immediately investigate any report of actual or planned hazing.



If the investigation determines 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) to remedy the past hazing behavior.

Nothing in this Policy prohibits the Affirmative Action Officer from complying with the requirements of the district's Affirmative Action Program as outlined in Policy 1550 and N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.1 et seq.

The Building Principal, in conjunction with the Affirmative Action Officer, will develop and conduct training and information programs for all school staff, pupils, parents and interested community members on the district's 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 published in pupil and staff handbooks upon its adoption by the Board. The Board will seek school community input prior to the initial adoption and any revisions to this Policy.

N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq.; 18A:42-5; 18A:42-6

Cross Reference: Policy Guide No. 5841

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