

# Saucon Valley School District

## Academic and Personnel Committee

November 4, 2020 – 5 pm

ZOOM Meeting

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*Welcome to the meeting of the Academic and Personnel Committee. Our objective is to serve the students, parents, and residents of our community. You are an important part of this meeting and we look forward to your questions and comments.*

*We are all here for the same reason. All opinions are welcomed and equally valuable. Our only request is that we address each other with civility and respect. Our courtesy toward each other is the best way to show our students how much we respect them as well.*

**Committee Members - Susan Baxter, Cedric Dettmar, Tracy Magnotta,  
Shamim Pakzad**

## Committee Agenda

- I. **Call to the Order** – *Tracy Magnotta, Committee Chair*
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Recording of Attendance** – *Tracy Magnotta, Committee Chair*
- IV. **Motion to Approve Agenda**
- V. **Approval of Minutes** – October 20, 2020
- VI. **Courtesy of the Floor to Visitors – Agenda Items Only** – *Visitors should state their name and address*
- VII. **Discussion**
  1. Policy 217 - Graduation Requirements
  2. Policy 247 - Hazing
  3. Policy 249 - Bullying/Cyberbullying
- VIII. **New Business**
- IX. **Old Business**
- X. **Citizens' Inquiries and Comments** – *Visitors should state their name and address.*

**XI. Announcements**

**Future Meetings ~**

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Tuesday, December 15, 2020

**XII. Motion to Adjourn Meeting**

***The Saucon Valley School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap.***

**Saucon Valley School District  
Academic and Personnel Committee  
Minutes of October 20, 2020 Zoom Meeting**

Present were Academic and Personnel Committee Board Members: Susan Baxter, Cedric Dettmar, and Shamim Pakzad. Also present were: Administrators Craig Butler, Jaime Vlasaty, Jim Deegan, and Tamara Gary and School Directors Shawn Welch, Michael Karabin.

Call to Order 5:03 pm

Mr. Dettmar, second by Dr. Pakzad, made a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Dettmar, second by Dr. Pakzad, made a motion to approve the minutes of October 7, 2020.

Agenda:

1. Policy 103 and 104 reviewed and moved to the 10/27 board meeting by unanimous consent.
2. Policy 217 was reviewed. Suggestions were made by the committee to look further into the policy regarding middle school classes/credits and college courses/credits and how such grades are calculated into the GPA. Dr. Butler and Mrs. Vlasaty will confer with the district solicitor and check for congruency with other applicable policies that may affect the wording and language on this policy.
3. Policy 247 and 249 were reviewed. Committee members asked questions about certain aspects of the policy. Dr. Butler and Mrs. Vlasaty will research the questions and concerns with the district solicitor and report back to the committee.
4. Policy 317, 417, and 517 were tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Dettmar, and second by Mrs. Baxter moved to adjourned the meeting at 5:56 p.m.

# **Saucon Valley School District**

## Policy

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Title – 217 Graduation Requirements

Section – Pupils

Adopted – June 13, 2006

Revised –

## Content

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### PURPOSE

The Board will acknowledge each student's successful completion of the instructional program appropriate to the student's interests and needs by awarding a diploma at graduation ceremonies.

### AUTHORITY

The Board shall adopt the graduation requirements students must achieve, which shall include course completion and grades, ~~completion of a culminating project, and results of district and/or state assessments~~ and any other requirements as prescribed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Board requires that specific graduation requirements be published and distributed to students and parents/guardians and be made available in each school building or on the district's website. All changes to graduation requirements shall be published and distributed to students and parents/guardians and made available in each school building or on the district's website immediately following approval by the Board.

The Board shall award a regular high school diploma to every student enrolled in this district who meets the requirements of graduation established by this Board as part of the district's ~~Strategic Plan~~ Comprehensive Plan. Identified students with disabilities who satisfactorily complete a special education program developed by an Individualized Education Program team shall be granted and issued regular high school diplomas.

The Board may permit an identified student with a disability to participate in graduation ceremonies with his/her graduating class, even though the student will not be granted a

diploma at that time and will continue to receive educational services from the district, provided that the student has completed four (4) years of high school.

A list of all graduating students shall be submitted to the Board for its information and release to the public.

A requirement for graduation shall be the completion of work and studies representing the instructional program assigned to grades 9 through 12, which are aligned to ~~establish~~ established academic standards.

The Board shall identify the planned courses for which credit toward graduation shall be awarded upon successful completion. These written plans shall be on file in the district office and shall be made available upon request for review by the designated representatives of the Department of Education.

~~Changes in graduation requirements will be described in the high school's annual course selection guide.~~

The Board requires that each candidate for graduation shall have earned and passed the required ~~subject~~ subjects and electives necessary to earn the number of credits mandated by the Board for graduation.

Changes in graduation requirements will be described in the annual high school Program of Studies.

The fourth year of high school shall not be required for graduation if a student has completed all other requirements for graduation ~~and attends a postsecondary institution as a full-time student.~~

A student may qualify for graduation by attending a district school part-time when ~~official~~ officially enrolled part-time in a postsecondary institution or when lawfully employed part-time, provided that all graduation requirements are met.

## DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for planning and executing graduation ceremonies that appropriately recognize this important achievement.

## GUIDELINES

Accurate recording of each student's achievement of academic standards shall be maintained, as required by law and state regulations.

~~Students shall be informed of graduation requirements they are required to complete.~~

Periodic warnings shall be issued to students in danger of not fulfilling graduation requirements.

### Calculation Of GPA

GPA will be calculated based on courses taken at the high school during the student's high school years. ~~Approved middle school credits requested by the parents/guardians as referenced in Board policy will be calculated in the high school GPA. Also, college~~ College courses taken while a student is in the high school will not be calculated in the GPA. The Superintendent or designee shall design, implement, and publish a system to provide a weighted value to advanced or accelerated courses.

### Students Repeating Courses

If a student fails a course, the course can be repeated. If a student passes a course, the course cannot be taken again ~~with~~ without an appeal to the principal. Credit will only be given once for a course. If a course is repeated, the student may, upon request in a letter to the principal, have the original grade excluded in the calculation of the GPA. However, both courses will be recorded on the transcript.

### Exclusion From Graduation Ceremony

A student who has completed the requirements for graduation shall not be denied a diploma as a disciplinary measure, but the student may be denied participation in the graduation ceremony when personal conduct so warrants. Such exclusion shall be regarded as a school suspension.

## **Saucon Valley School District**

### Policy

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Title – 247 Hazing

Section – 200 Pupils

Adopted – August 22, 2006

Revised –

### Content

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#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, positive environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the district and are prohibited at all times.

#### DEFINITIONS

**Hazing** occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:

1. Violate federal or state criminal law.
2. Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.
3. Endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics or exposure to the elements.
4. Endure brutality of a mental nature, including activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment.
5. Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
6. Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the student.

**Aggravated hazing** occurs when a person commits an act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student and:

1. The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student;  
or
2. The person causes, coerces or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the student.

**Organizational hazing** occurs when an organization intentionally, knowingly or recklessly promotes or facilitates hazing.

**Student activity or organization** means any activity, society, corps, team, club or service, social or similar group, operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the district, whose members are primarily students or alumni of the organization.

For purposes of this policy, **bodily injury** shall mean impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.

For purposes of this policy, **serious bodily injury** shall mean bodily injury which creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ.

#### AUTHORITY

The Board prohibits hazing in connection with any student activity or organization regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or outside of school hours. No student, parent/guardian, coach, sponsor, volunteer, or district employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist engage in, or ignore any hazing activity.

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation of this policy regardless of whether:

1. The consent of the student was sought or obtained, or
2. The conduct was sanctioned or approved by the school or organization.

The district will investigate all complaints of hazing and will administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy.

The Board encourages students who believe they, or others, have been subjected to hazing to promptly report such incidents to the building principal.

#### Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination

Every report of alleged hazing that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a hazing investigation, potential issues of discrimination are identified, the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged hazing.

## DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

District administrators shall investigate promptly all complaints of hazing and administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy.

Students, administrators, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, and district employees shall be alert to incidents of hazing and shall report such conduct to the building principal.

## GUIDELINES

The district shall annually inform students, parents/guardians, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, and district staff of the district's policy prohibiting hazing, including district rules, penalties for violations of the policy, and the program established by the district for enforcement of the policy, by means of distribution of written policy, publication in handbooks and verbal instructions by the coach or sponsor at the start of the season or program.

This policy, along with other applicable district policies, procedures and Codes of Conduct, shall be provided to all school athletic coaches and all sponsors and volunteers affiliated with a student activity or organization, prior to coaching an athletic activity or serving as a responsible adult supervising, advising, assisting or otherwise participating in a student activity or organization together with a notice that they are expected to read and abide by the policies, procedures and Codes of Conduct.

### Complaint Procedure

A student who believes that they have been subject to hazing is encouraged to promptly report the incident to the building principal or designee.

Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted

and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.

The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of hazing shall be provided to the building principal or designee, who shall promptly notify the Superintendent or designee of the allegations and determine who shall conduct the investigation. Allegations of hazing shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of hazing brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be hazing under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.

### Interim Measures/Police

Upon receipt of a complaint of hazing, the building principal or designee, in consultation with the Superintendent or designee, shall determine what, if any interim measures should be put in place to protect students from further hazing, bullying, discrimination, or retaliatory conduct related to the alleged incident and report. Such interim measures may include, but not be limited to, the suspension of an adult who is involved, the separation of alleged victims and perpetrators, ~~and the determination of what~~ counseling, extensions of deadlines, modifications of class schedules, assistance from community health resources, including counseling and assistance from rape crisis programs. The building principal or designee shall ask the complaining student ~~needs or wants through questioning~~ what s/he wants or needs in terms of interim measures and consider the student's response when determining which, if any, interim measures the district will employ.

Those receiving the initial report and conducting or overseeing the investigation will assess whether the complaint, if proven, would constitute hazing, aggravated hazing or organizational hazing and shall report it to the police consistent with district practice and, as appropriate, consult with legal counsel about whether to report the matter to the police at every stage of the proceeding. The decision to report a matter to the police should not involve an analysis by district personnel of whether safe harbor provisions might apply to the person being reported, but information on the facts can be shared with the police in this regard.

*Referral to Law Enforcement and Safe Schools Reporting Requirements –*

For purposes of reporting hazing incidents to law enforcement in accordance with Safe Schools Act reporting, the term incident shall mean an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents, as defined in the Safe Schools Act, committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in a defined incident as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all new incidents to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.

#### Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

#### Retaliation

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of hazing or participation in an investigation of allegations of hazing is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

#### Consequences for Violations

*Safe Harbor –*

An individual needing medical attention or seeking medical attention for another shall not be subject to criminal prosecution if the individual complies with the requirements under law, subject to the limitations set forth in law.

*Students –*

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the investigator shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or sponsor, up to and including removal from the activity or organization. The fact of whether a student qualified for and received safe harbor under a criminal investigation shall be considered in assigning discipline.

~~In addition to other authorized discipline, building principals shall have the authority, after providing the student or students an informal hearing, to impose a fine of up to  
{ } Fifty dollars (\$50)  
{ } \_\_\_\_\_ dollars (\$\_\_\_\_)  
on each student determined to have engaged in hazing in violation of this policy.~~

~~{ } When recommended disciplinary action results in a formal hearing before the Board, in addition to other authorized disciplinary consequences, the Board may also impose a fine of up to  
{ } One hundred fifty dollars (\$150)  
{ } \_\_\_\_\_ dollars (\$\_\_\_\_)  
on each student determined to have engaged in hazing in violation of this policy.~~

~~{ } When fines have not been paid, the Superintendent shall have the authority to direct that student diplomas and/or transcripts be withheld until payment in full is made or a payment plan is agreed upon. In cases of economic hardship, the Superintendent shall consider whether diplomas and/or transcripts should be released despite an unpaid fine.~~

*Nonstudent Violators/Organizational Hazing –*

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding that a coach, sponsor, or volunteer affiliated with the student activity or organization engaged in, condoned or ignored any violation of this policy, the coach, sponsor, or volunteer shall be disciplined in accordance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations. Discipline could include, but is not limited to, dismissal from the position as coach, sponsor, or volunteer, and/or dismissal from district employment.

If an organization is found to have engaged in organizational hazing, it shall be subject to the imposition of fines and other appropriate penalties. Penalties may include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to otherwise operate under the sanction or recognition of the district.

*Criminal Prosecution –*

Any person or organization that causes or participates in hazing may also be subject to criminal prosecution.

LEGAL REFERENCES

18 Pa. C.S.A. 2802  
18 Pa. C.S.A. 2803  
18 Pa. C.S.A. 2804  
18 Pa. C.S.A. 2808  
18 Pa. C.S.A. 2806  
18 Pa. C.S.A. 2801  
24 P.S. 511  
18 Pa. C.S.A. 2301  
Pol. 122  
Pol. 123  
Pol. 103  
Pol. 103.1  
18 Pa. C.S.A. 2810  
24 P.S. 1303-A  
22 PA Code 10.2  
35 P.S. 780-102  
24 P.S. 1302.1-A  
22 PA Code 10.21  
22 PA Code 10.22  
Pol. 805.1  
22 PA Code 10.25  
Pol. 218  
Pol. 233  
Pol. 317, 417, 517  
18 Pa. C.S.A. 2801 et seq  
22 PA Code 10.23  
Pol. 113.1

Pol. 123.1

## Saucon Valley School District

### Policy

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Title – 249 Bullying/Cyberbullying

Section – Pupils

Adopted – October 10, 2006

Revised – June 25, 2019

### Content

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#### PURPOSE

The Board is committed to provide a safe, positive learning climate for district students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by district students.

#### DEFINITIONS

**Bullying** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, ~~which occurs in the school setting and/or outside a school setting~~ that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment in the school, or
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

[Bullying may occur in the school setting or out of the school setting.](#)

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

**School setting** means

1. [In the school;](#)
2. ~~in the school, on~~ [On](#) school grounds, ~~in~~;
3. [In](#) school vehicles, ~~at~~;
4. [At](#) a designated bus stop ~~or at~~;
5. [At](#) any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school; [or](#)

6. On the internet, including, but not limited to, messaging, texting, emailing, posting on social media, when the district's hardware or network are used to access the internet for such activity, or when the posting is done on a school-sponsored website or social media account.

Out of the school setting means at any place not identified in "school setting" above. Examples include, but are not limited to, at private residences, commercial establishments, or non-school public places, or on the internet or electronically when the district's hardware, network, or school-sponsored websites or social media accounts are not used.

Bullying situations may include but are not limited to physical intimidation or assault; extortion; oral or written threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; social isolation; or a situation that creates an imbalance of power in a relationship.

#### AUTHORITY

The Board directs that complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the filing of the complaint, and the investigation shall be maintained, consistent with the school district's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of bullying or participation in an investigation into allegations of bullying.

#### Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination

Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination are identified, the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.

#### DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Superintendent or designee shall:

1. develop administrative regulations to implement this policy;

2. ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students; and
3. submit a copy of this policy with the district's annual Safe Schools Report.

#### Sec. 1303.1-A

Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free from bullying. Staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying shall take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene--unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, s/he shall report the bullying to the school principal for further investigation. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents/guardians, and school staff; review of school records; and any other appropriate means of investigation.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students, to ensure the rights of his/her fellow students, and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying.

The Board expects students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of bullying to report it to a school official for further investigation. Any student who retaliates against another person for reporting bullying or participating in an investigation into allegations of bullying may be subject to appropriate disciplinary consequences.

#### GUIDELINES

Students shall be informed that they may choose to report bullying complaints to school principals, teachers, counselors, nurses, administrators, and other instructional and non-instructional staff. A district staff member who receives a complaint of bullying shall notify the building principal within 48 hours.

If the school principal is the subject of a complaint, the student or staff member receiving the complaint shall report the complaint directly to the Assistant Superintendent or the Superintendent.

When a student believes that s/he is being bullied, intimidated or in physical danger, the student should immediately inform the bully that his/her behavior is unwelcome, offensive, or inappropriate, to the extent possible. The student shall also follow the established complaint procedure.

## Complaint Procedure

1. A student shall report a complaint of bullying to the school principal or a school district employee, who shall inform the student of his/her rights and of the complaint process.
2. The school principal or designee shall immediately conduct an impartial, thorough investigation of the alleged bullying behavior, which should include interviewing the individual accused of bullying and the potential victim.

The school principal or designee shall review complaints of bullying for conduct which may not be proven to be bullying under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies. Since harassment and bullying are closely related types of behavior, if it is determined that, as per Board Policy 103 or 103.2, the student is being harassed rather than bullied, the investigation and other applicable procedures should proceed within the framework of Board Policy 103 or 103.2, as appropriate.

3. The school principal or designee shall summarize the investigation as per school procedures, recommending disposition of the complaint.
4. If the investigation results in a substantiated charge of bullying, the school district shall take prompt corrective action and impose disciplinary action according to the Code of Conduct and applicable Board policies to ensure the bullying ceases and will not recur. Such action may include guidance counseling; change of seating, change of class or schedule; other method for separation of the bully and victim; parental conference; detention; suspension; expulsion; involuntary transfer to another school, class, or bus operated by the school district; or other appropriate forms of disciplinary consequence.

Depending on the severity of the incident, the school principal may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan; separating and supervising the students involved; providing staff support for students as necessary; reporting incidents to law enforcement if appropriate; and developing a supervision plan with the parents/guardians.

If it is concluded that a student has made false accusations, such student shall be subject to disciplinary action, consistent with the school Code of Conduct.

## Appeal Procedure

If the complainant or accused is not satisfied with the school principal's decision, s/he

may file a written appeal to the Assistant Superintendent.

### Education

The district may develop and implement bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide district staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 1302-A, 1303.1-A

State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 12.3

Board Policy – 000, 218, 233, 236