

## **Bullying/Hazing**

The District is committed to maintaining a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment so that no student is subject to bullying, hazing, or similar behavior while in school or participating in school-related activities. Students and their parents or legal guardians shall be notified that the school, school bus, and all other school environments are to be safe and secure for all. Therefore, all statements or actions of a bullying, hazing, or similar behavior made on campus, at school-sponsored activities or events, on school buses, at school bus stops, and on the way to and from school shall not be tolerated. Even if made in a joking manner, these statements or actions of bullying, hazing, or similar behavior towards other students or school personnel are unacceptable. All students, teachers, and other school employees shall take responsible measures within the scope of their individual authority to prevent bullying, hazing or similar behavior(s).

### **ACTIONS NOT TOLERATED**

The use of lewd, profane or vulgar language is prohibited. In addition, students shall not engage in behaviors such as hazing, bullying, menacing, taunting, intimidating, verbal or physical abuse of others, or other threatening behavior.<sup>1</sup> Examples include but are not limited to making derogatory comments around sexual orientation, people's size, weight, height, disability, or perceived intelligence/ability. This policy extends to any/all student language or behavior including, but not limited to, the use of electronic or online methods. Such behavior is disruptive of the educational process and interferes with the ability of other students to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered. All students deserve equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment.

These provisions shall not be interpreted to prohibit civil exchange of opinions or debate protected under the state or federal law where the opinion expressed does not otherwise materially or substantially disrupt the education process or intrude upon the rights of others.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **BULLYING DEFINED**

Per [KRS 158.148](#), "bullying" is defined as any unwanted verbal, physical, or social behavior among students that involves a real or perceived power imbalance and is repeated or has the potential to be repeated:

1. That occurs on school premises, on school-sponsored transportation, or at a school-sponsored event:
2. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment; or
3. That disrupts the education process.

This definition shall not be interpreted to prohibit civil exchange of opinions or debate or cultural practices protected under the state or federal law where the opinion expressed does not otherwise materially or substantially disrupt the education process.

## **Bullying/Hazing**

### **HAZING DEFINED**

Per [KRS 508.180](#), “hazing” is defined as an action which endangers the mental or physical health of a minor or student for the purpose of recruitment, initiation into, affiliation with, or enhancing or maintaining membership or status within any organization\*, including but not limited to actions which cause, coerce, or force a minor or a student to:

- (a) Violate federal or state law;
- (b) Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug, tobacco product, or other controlled substance which subjects the minor or student to a risk of mental harm or physical injury;
- (c) Endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating or paddling, branding, or exposure to the elements;
- (d) Endure brutality of a mental nature, including personal servitude, sleep deprivation, or circumstances which would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial mental distress;
- (e) Endure brutality or unwanted activity of a sexual nature; or
- (f) Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of mental harm or physical injury to the minor or student.

\*Per [KRS 508.180](#), “organization” is defined as a number of persons who are associated with a school or postsecondary education institution and each other, including a student organization, fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, club, or similar group and includes any student organization registered pursuant to policies of the school or postsecondary education institution at any time during the previous five (5) years.

### **REPORTS**

As provided in the District Code of Acceptable Behavior and Discipline, students that believe they are targets of bullying/hazing shall be provided with a process to enable them to report such incidents to District personnel for appropriate action.

Employees are expected to take action in situations involving student welfare and safety, including following District policy requirements for intervening and reporting to the Principal or to their immediate supervisor those situations that threaten, harass, or endanger the safety of students, other staff members, or visitors to the school or District. Such instances shall include, but are not limited to, bullying or hazing of students and harassment/discrimination of staff, students or visitors by any party.

Students who believe they have been a target of bullying or who have observed other students being bullied shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, report it.

The District Code shall clearly identify to whom reports of alleged instances of bullying or hazing shall be made. Employees must report all incidents of protected class bullying/hazing/harassment to the alleged target’s Principal, as directed by Board policy 09.42811.

**Bullying/Hazing****REPORTS (CONTINUED)**

Employees must do the following:

1. Report bullying and hazing to appropriate law enforcement authorities as required by policy 09.2211; and
2. Investigate and complete documentation as required by policy 09.42811 covering federally protected areas.

**OTHER CLAIMS**

When a complaint is received that does not appear to be covered by this policy, administrators shall review other policies that may govern the allegations, including but not limited to, 09.426 and/or 09.42811. Harassment/discrimination allegations shall be governed by Policy 09.42811.

**REFERENCES:**

<sup>1</sup>[KRS 158.150](#)

[KRS 158.148](#)

[KRS 158.156](#)

[KRS 160.290](#)

[KRS 508.180](#)

[KRS 525.080](#)

Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser, 478 U.S. 675, 106 S.Ct. 3159, 92 L.Ed.2d 549 (1986)

Mahanoy Area School District v. B. L., 594 US \_ (2021)

Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District, 393 U.S. 503, 89 S.Ct. 733, 21 L.Ed.2d 731 (1969)

**RELATED POLICIES:**

03.162; 03.262; 09.13; 09.421; 09.425; 09.426; 09.4281; 09.42811; 09.438  
09.2211 (re: reports required by law)

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