



Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Hazing
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Pol. 113.1

Pol. 916

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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:[\[1\]](#)

1. Violate federal or state criminal law.
2. Consume or inhale including but not limited to, any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.
3. Endure brutality, meaning extreme cruelty or deliberate violent meanness.
4. Endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics or exposure to the elements.
5. 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.
6. Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
7. Endure any other activity or physical condition 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:[\[2\]](#)

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.[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation of this policy regardless of whether:[\[5\]](#)

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

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.[\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)

For purposes of this policy, **bodily injury** shall mean impairment of physical condition or substantial pain. [8]

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. [8]

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. [4][5][7][9][10]

No student, parent/guardian, coach, sponsor, volunteer or district employee shall engage in, condone, tolerate or ignore any form of hazing.

The Board encourages students who 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 and Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a hazing investigation, potential issues of discrimination are identified, the 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. [11][12][13]

Delegation of Responsibility

District administrators shall investigate promptly all complaints of hazing and administer appropriate discipline to any individual or student activity or organization found to be in violation this policy.

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

When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy. [14][15]

Guidelines

In addition to posting this policy on the district's website, the district shall annually inform students, parents/guardians, coaches, sponsors, volunteers and district employees that hazing of district students is prohibited, by means of distribution of written policy, publication in handbooks, presentation at an assembly, verbal instructions by the coach or sponsor at the start of the season or program or posting of notice/signs. [4]

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 annually, prior to coaching an athletic activity or serving as a responsible adult supervision, advising, assisting or otherwise participating in a student activity or organization. [7]

Complaint Procedure

When a student believes that they have been subject to hazing, the student shall promptly report the incident, orally or in writing, to the building principal.

Where any coach, sponsor, volunteer, employee or any other person is aware of or suspects hazing s/he must immediately report such incident to the building principal.

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 the complaining student needs or wants through questioning.

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 of the facts can be shared with the police in this regard. [\[16\]](#).

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. [\[17\]](#)[\[18\]](#)[\[19\]](#)

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. [\[17\]](#)[\[18\]](#)[\[20\]](#)[\[21\]](#)[\[22\]](#)[\[23\]](#)

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.[\[18\]](#)[\[23\]](#)[\[24\]](#)

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.[\[17\]](#)[\[23\]](#)

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.[\[16\]](#)

Students -

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the principal shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, the student may 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.[\[4\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[16\]](#)[\[25\]](#)[\[26\]](#)

Building principals shall take such disciplinary action for violations of this policy as is appropriate and within their authority, as set forth in policy and the Code of Student Conduct. In addition to other authorized discipline, building principals shall have the authority, after providing the student or students an informal hearing, to require restitution if property damage occurred from each student determined to have engaged in hazing in violation of this policy.[\[4\]](#)[\[25\]](#)

When restitution has not been paid, the Superintendent shall have 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 unpaid restitution.[\[4\]](#)

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, tolerated or ignored any violation of this policy, s/he will 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.[\[27\]](#)

If a student activity or organization authorizes hazing in blatant disregard of this policy or other applicable district rules, penalties may also 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 who causes or participates in hazing may also be subject to criminal prosecution. [\[4\]](#)

[249-Attach 1 Report Form-NO 252.pdf \(159 KB\)](#)