

*Student Discipline**Definitions*

For purposes of this Policy and the accompanying Administrative Regulation, the following definitions shall apply:

Bullying shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts which meet the following criteria:

1. directed at another student or students;
2. occurs in a school setting;
3. is severe, persistent or pervasive; and
4. has the effect of doing any of the following:
 - a. substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - b. creating a threatening environment; or
 - c. substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

School setting shall mean in school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the District.

Hazing is any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person or that results in the willful destruction or removal of public or private property for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization, club, team, group or activity.

Endanger the mental health shall include but not be limited to any activity that would subject an individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, or forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment or otherwise adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates.

Endanger the physical health shall include but not be limited to any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping; beating; branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, beverage, drug, or controlled substance; or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates.

Harassment means verbal, written, electronic, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or religion when such conduct:

1. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects a student's educational performance or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment; and/or,

2. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's educational performance; and/or,
3. Adversely affects a student's educational opportunities.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, bullying, hazing or other verbal, written, electronic, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or religion. Harassment also includes sexual harassment, as defined below.

Sexual harassment is a specific form of harassment which means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, gestures of a sexual nature, or display of materials which evoke responses not in keeping with the atmosphere intended for the classroom or the school environment.

Threatening behavior shall mean a physical, verbal or written threat to (1) commit violence with intent to terrorize, injure or damage another or others, (2) cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly or facility of transportation, or (3) otherwise cause serious public inconvenience with reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

Transient threat is a broad category including all threats that do not reflect a genuine intent to harm others.

Substantive threat means behaviors or statements that represent a serious risk of harm to others.

Behaviors targeting others means bullying, hazing, harassment, and threatening behaviors collectively.

General Discipline Guidelines

The principal or designee of each school in the District shall have the authority to discipline students for sufficient reason in accordance with the specific building Code of Conduct, Pennsylvania Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and other applicable Federal and State laws and/or regulations.

Discipline measures may include warning, detention, suspension, expulsion or other appropriate responses to the circumstances as determined by the principal or designee. The severity of any consequence should be proportional to the severity of the offense and take into account, among other considerations, the age of the student, the student's prior disciplinary record, special circumstances about the incident, as well as any applicable laws or regulations.

School personnel shall promptly notify the disciplined student's parent or guardian of such disciplinary action.

Offenses committed on school grounds, in school vehicles or while participating in school-sponsored activities on or off school premises or that have some other legally-recognized nexus to the school that are considered to be of an extremely serious nature and may result in either suspension or expulsion, include but are not limited to the following:

1. Inappropriate physical contact, attack, fighting, bullying, hazing, harassment or threatening behavior.
2. The use of, distribution of, or possession of, any substance subject to Policy 5405 (Student Substance Abuse) or 5411 (Tobacco, Smoking Products and Electronic Smoking Products). Aiding or abetting any of the above actions regarding substances subject to Policy 5405 or 5411 shall be treated in the same way.
3. The use, possession, or transfer of any item which could be considered a weapon or which is dangerous in nature, as outlined in Policy 5410 or in accordance with applicable law.
4. Consistent lateness to or cutting of class or detentions.
5. Destruction or defacing of school property.
6. Infraction of school rules that carries the consequence of suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the applicable Code of Conduct or otherwise in Board Policy or an accompanying Administrative Regulation.
7. Conduct adversely affecting the school routine or otherwise endangering the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.
8. Inappropriate physical contact, attack, threatening behavior or other retaliatory conduct directed at school staff members, their property, or their families.
9. Chronic insubordination.

School personnel shall also promptly notify the parent or guardian of any student determined to be a target or recipient of behaviors targeting others in violation of this Policy. The Superintendent or designee will establish guidelines in the Regulation for further communication of situations involving threatening behaviors.

Suspension

When a suspendable offense occurs, the principal or designee shall meet with the student, at which time the student shall have the opportunity to offer an explanation of the infraction. After that meeting, the principal or designee may suspend a student, either in-school or out-of-school. Parents/guardians will be notified.

When a suspension exceeding three school days is under consideration, the principal or designee shall offer the student and student's parents/guardians an informal hearing, as required by law. After such hearing the principal or designee may extend the suspension for a period of up to ten total school days. Parents/guardians will be notified.

The principal shall promptly report all suspension actions to the Superintendent.

Expulsion

The Board may either expel for a period exceeding ten (10) consecutive school days or may permanently expel any student whose misconduct and disobedience is such as to warrant this sanction. Expulsion proceedings shall be in accordance with applicable state law and regulations.

Supports

The Superintendent or designee will coordinate with the schools to promote reasonable uniformity of available supports among the schools with consideration for elementary, middle school and high school levels.

Special Considerations - Discipline of Students with Disabilities

The discipline of students with disabilities shall be in accordance with federal and state law, their Individualized Education Program, a behavioral intervention plan and Board Policy.

Special Considerations – Bullying, Hazing, Harassment and Threatening Behavior

It is the Policy of the Board to maintain a safe, positive and respectful environment for students and staff that is free from bullying, hazing, harassment and threatening behavior. Any form of bullying, hazing, harassment or threatening behavior that is a part of a school sponsored activity is prohibited. No student, coach, sponsor, volunteer, District employee, administrator, representative, agent, or contractor shall plan, direct, encourage, assist, engage in, tolerate, condone, or fail to properly report any known instances of bullying, hazing, harassment or threatening behavior.

Students who have been subjected to bullying, hazing harassment or threatening behavior are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to a building administrator, teacher and/or school counselor.

Students, administrators, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, District employees, representatives, agents, and contractors shall be alert to incidents of bullying, hazing, harassment and threatening behavior and shall promptly report such conduct to their supervisor or the building principal.

The Board directs that the District promptly investigate all complaints of bullying, hazing, harassment and threatening behavior, and administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this Policy or the accompanying Administrative Regulation, in

accordance with applicable Board Policies, Administrative Regulations, and any applicable Code of Conduct.

Complaints of bullying, hazing, harassment and threatening behavior may also be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation, as required by law or as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

No reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of bullying, hazing, harassment or threatening behavior. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the District's legal and investigative obligations.

The District shall inform students, staff, parents, independent contractors and volunteers that bullying, hazing, harassment and threatening behavior of students will not be tolerated, by a variety of methods which may include publication in handbooks, on the District's website, and presentations to students and staff when appropriate.

Threat Assessment Team

Each District school will establish a Threat Assessment Team comprised of school and District personnel to oversee the threat assessment process and consult with law enforcement. The Superintendent or designee will issue regulations to implement and train the Threat Assessment Team.

Reporting Disciplinary Incidents to the Board

The Board shall receive an annual summary of disciplinary incidents, consistent with state and federal reporting.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and promulgate an Administrative Regulation implementing this Policy.

The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall ensure the review of this Policy and the accompanying Administrative Regulation no less than every two (2) years, and recommend any necessary revisions.

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