

ANTI-HAZING

The Bellmore-Merrick Board of Education recognizes the importance of co-curricular activities and athletic participation as being a vital component of the total educational experience. The Board encourages student participation in activities that foster physical, emotional and social growth.

To ensure the welfare and safety of all growth, the Board does not condone any form of intimidation or harassment, known as hazing. Hazing, for the purpose of this policy, is a prohibited conduct, and includes, but is not limited to, committing an act against a student(s) or coercing a student(s) into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of emotional, physical, or psychological harm to a person and is for the purpose of intimidating, harassing, humiliating, harming, threatening, ridiculing, ostracizing, degrading, or embarrassing another student or students. No student, coach, advisor, volunteer, or district and/or contracted employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist, or engage in any hazing activity, as defined above. The Board directs that no administrator, coach, advisor, volunteer, or district employee shall permit, condone, or tolerate hazing, in any form.

The Board recognizes that in addition to being abusive and inappropriate behavior that harms victims and negatively impacts the school culture by creating an environment of fear, distrust, and intimidation, hazing of students and staff, as defined in this policy, could also lead to violation of law. The Board is committed to providing and promoting a safe, orderly, civil, positive and productive learning and working environment. To this end, hazing acts committed by students, staff, volunteer, or contracted employee on school grounds, school buses, and/or at all school sponsored activities, programs, and events, including those that take place at locations outside the district, are strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated, regardless of the actor's intention. In addition, any omission or failure to act to prevent hazing, and/or failure to report its occurrence is likewise prohibited.

The Superintendent of Schools shall establish administrative procedures to provide guidelines for the implementation of this policy. The procedures shall include descriptions of prohibited conduct, reporting and investigative procedures, as needed, and provisions to ensure notice of this policy is provided to all applicable parties as stated above.

Cross-ref: 5300, Code of Conduct

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ANTI-HAZING REGULATION

I. Definition

For purposes of policy 0114 and this regulation, hazing is a prohibited conduct and includes, but is not limited to, committing an act against a student(s) or coercing a student(s) into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of emotional, physical, or psychological harm to a person and is for the purpose of intimidating, harassment, humiliating, harming, threatening, ridiculing, ostracizing, degrading, or embarrassing another student or students.

The terms “hazing” ***does not include*** the ordinary activities of customary athletic events, tryouts, intramural activities, clubs, or other similar student contests or competitions.

II. The term “hazing” includes, but is not limited to, any act that:

1. Involves brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding; unreasonable and/or excessive forced calisthenics; forced exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverage or liquid, tobacco, drug, controlled substance, or other potentially dangerous chemical or substance; sleep deprivation; sexual assault; forced conduct which could result in degradation or humiliation; forcing, requiring or permitting another to be subject to wearing or carrying any embarrassing, obscene or physically burdensome article; requiring personal servitude; or any other forced physical activity, sexual in nature, that creates a servitude; or any other forced physical activity that creates a substantial risk of emotional, physical, or psychological harm or that could adversely affect the safety of another person; or
2. Requires, coerces, or compels a student to violate local, state, or federal law or school district policies.

III. Roles

A. Students

1. Students shall be expected to understand all aspects of this hazing policy and regulation.
2. Students shall not engage in the hazing of any student or staff member.
3. Students shall actively engage in positive team-building and character building activities.
4. Students shall report any instances of hazing to the appropriate staff member (e.g. teacher, school counselor, etc.) or administrator (assistant principal, principal).

B. Parents/Guardians

1. Parents/Guardians shall be expected to understand all aspects of this hazing policy and regulation.
2. Parents/Guardians shall be expected to reinforce this policy and regulation by discussing the inappropriateness of hazing with their children.
3. Parents/guardians shall not encourage students to initiate or participate in hazing activities.
4. Parents/guardians shall explain the dangers of hazing activities.
5. Parents/guardians shall support the school district in the enforcement of this policy and regulation.
6. Parents/guardians shall report instances of hazing to the appropriate law enforcement and school authorities.

C. Staff Members

1. Staff members shall be expected to understand all aspects of this hazing policy and regulation.
2. Staff members selected by the Principal or his/her designee shall teach students about this policy and regulation and explain the dangers of hazing.
3. All staff members shall promptly report to the appropriate administrator any instances of hazing that has been brought to their attention, they observed or have knowledge of.
4. Staff members shall work with students to develop positive team-building and character-building activities.
5. Staff members shall not permit, condone, tolerate, cause to happen, or participate in any type of hazing activity.

D. Administrators

1. Administrators shall be expected to understand all aspects of this hazing policy and regulation.
2. Administrators shall review this policy with staff annually and assure that it is understood and enforced.
3. Administrators shall inform parents and members of groups established to support various aspects of the educational or co-curricular program about this policy.
4. Administrators shall work with staff, parents, and students to create positive team-building and character-building activities.
5. Administrators shall act promptly to investigate any and all reported allegations of hazing and, if applicable, report any violation of this policy that constitutes a crime to the applicable, report any violation of this policy that constitutes a crime to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

6. Administrators shall report the findings of any investigations concerning hazing to the Superintendent of Schools.

E. Superintendent of Schools

1. The Superintendent of Schools shall establish appropriate staff development opportunities so that staff members can educate students about the details of this policy and regulation.
2. The Superintendent shall take such steps to assure that the hazing policy and its accompanying administrative procedures are publicized.
3. The Superintendent shall keep the Board of Education apprised, as necessary, of confirmed incidents of hazing.

IV. Publicizing Policy to Students, Staff, and Parents

Under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, Administrators will publicize the hazing policy and regulation through written communications, faculty meetings, and various student assemblies. Such communication will:

1. Clearly define hazing and examples thereof.
2. Establish the roles of students, parents, staff members, administrators, and the Superintendent in preventing hazing.
3. Explain the roles of students, parents, staff members, administrators, and the Superintendent in preventing hazing.
4. Describes procedures for reporting hazing allegations.

V. Reporting and Investigation of Complaints

Allegations of hazing are serious accusations and complaints of hazing should be made after careful and due consideration.

- A. Any student who believes he/she has been the victim of a hazing action shall report the incident to a teacher, administrator, school counselor/psychologist/social worker, or coach.
- B. The staff member receiving the complaint shall provide the complainant with the Hazing Complaint Form (Exhibit 0114-E.1) and assist him/her in completing the form, as necessary.
- C. The teacher, school counselor/psychologist/social worker, coach, or administrator must immediately report the incident to the appropriate building administrator.
- D. The administrator, after investigation of the alleged hazing incident, shall notify the parent/guardian of the complainant, the parent/guardian of the student alleged to have hazed, and the parent/guardian of any student who witnessed the hazing activity.

- E. Any staff member who believes he/she has been the victim of a hazing action shall report the incident to an administrator and complete the Hazing Complaint Form (Exhibit 0114-E.1).
- F. Any student or staff member who learns of a hazing allegation shall immediately report the incident to the appropriate building administrator.
- G. Any student who witnesses a hazing action shall immediately report the incident to the appropriate building administrator.
- H. Reported allegations of hazing shall be investigated promptly by the appropriate administrator.
- I. The administrator conducting the investigation, if not the Building Principal, shall report the allegation to the Principal. The Superintendent shall be informed immediately that an investigation has been initiated.
- J. Upon completion of the investigation, the administrator conducting the investigation shall submit a written report to the Superintendent (Exhibit 0114-E.2, Hazing Investigation Report Form).
- K. Once completed, the person(s) against whom the hazing charge has been brought, the complainant(s), and parent/guardian of all parties involved shall be advised of the results of the investigation.

VI. Disciplinary and Corrective Actions

- A. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any student who violates this policy in accordance with Education Law §3214 and the District's Code of Conduct. Disciplinary action may range from a verbal or written reprimand to suspension, including permanent suspension, and/or the loss of privileges.
- B. If an employee is found to be in violation of this policy, appropriate corrective action will be taken in accordance with negotiated contracts, Civil Service Law, and Education Law.
- C. Any retaliatory conduct by the person against whom the complaint is lodged or anyone cooperating with the investigation will result in disciplinary and/or corrective action against the person.
- D. If a student or employee is found to have filed a frivolous hazing complaint, appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action will be taken in accordance with applicable rules, regulations, policies and/or law.

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HAZING COMPLAINT FORM

Name of Complainant: _____

School/Department: _____

Grade: _____

Name of Person Receiving the Complaint: _____

Date of Hazing Incident: _____

Place of Hazing Incident: _____

Please describe in detail the event causing you to file this complaint, including all relevant information, **specifically**, name of individual(s) alleged to have hazed, in chronological/sequential order:

Name(s) of witness(es), if any:

Has this hazing incident been reported before? _____

If yes, when? _____ To whom? _____

Signature of Complainant

Date

HAZING INVESTIGATION REPORT

Name and Position of Administrator: _____

Name of Complainant: _____

Date complaint received by administrator: _____

Name of individual(s) alleged to have hazed: _____

Date and place of alleged incident(s): _____

Nature of the complaint: _____

Process of investigation (including date complainant interviewed, witnesses and date(s) interviewed, statements obtained, etc.):

Conclusions: _____

Recommendations: _____

Date report submitted to the Superintendent _____

Signature of Administrator

Date

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