



CODE: F 24

READING SCHOOL DISTRICT

HAZING POLICY

I. PURPOSE

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

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing.
- B. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone or tolerate hazing.
- C. Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- D. This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours.
- E. A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act.
- F. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Hazing" means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with an educational institution; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of a student. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off campus of an educational institution. Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extracurricular, or military training program goals, provided that: a) the goals are approved by the educational institution; and b) the activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

- 1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking or placing a harmful substance on the body.

2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
 3. Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
 4. Any activity that intimates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.
 5. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law of school district policies or regulations.
- B. The definitions of educational institution, organization, pledging and student shall be the same as those in section 151 of Title 16.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES

- A. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct, which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy.
- B. The building principal is the person responsible for receiving reports of hazing at the building level. Any person may report hazing directly to the superintendent.
- C. Teachers, administrators, volunteers, contractors and other employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events, which might include hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct, which may constitute hazing, shall inform the building principal immediately.
- D. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignment.

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

- A. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials or a third party designated by the school district.
- B. The school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students, or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.
- C. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe

to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, applicable statutory authority, including the district policies and regulations.

VI. REPRISAL

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged hazing or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such hazing. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

VII. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

This policy shall appear in each school's Parent/Student Handbook and in each school's Building and Staff handbooks.

Warned by Reading School Board: January 21, 2004
Adopted by Reading School Board: February 17, 2004