

ANTI-HAZING POLICY

I. THE POLICY

A. Purpose

It is the firm policy of Monroe County Schools to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from both sexual harassment and hazing in any form. Students need a safe disciplined environment that meets their educational needs. The School Board and the administration of the Monroe County School System are committed to taking positive action when hazing occurs.

B. Authority

W. Va. Constitution, Article XII, §2; W. Va. Code §18-2-5; §18-2-33; and WV State Board Policy Series 25, Anti-Hazing Policy (2425).

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee of the Monroe County School System to haze a student or an employee through conduct or communication or in the case of an employee, the tacit approval of, activities that would be deemed hazing.

The Monroe County School District will investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, and discipline any student or employee who violates this policy.

II. DEFINITION

- A. Hazing - Any act or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student or employee; any act or situation which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with or as a condition for continued membership in any organization operating under the sanctions of the school; any act or situation that is of a brutal physical nature; any act or situation which adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the individual

Hazing examples: Whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance, mental stress, including but not limited to, sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, any forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, including but not limited to performance of embarrassing and/or required stunts, wearing costumes, speaking in a harassing manner, interrogating new members, lineup, scavenger hunt, kidnaping, personal services, authority

over new members, anything that tends to diminish the self-esteem or dignity, or categorize the new member and/or member as a second class citizen.

- B. Co-curricular Activities - Activities that are closely related to identifiable academic programs and/or areas of study that serve to complement academic curricular such as band, band camp, drama club, student council, or newspaper staff.
- C. Extra-curricular Activities - Activities that are not related to academic programs such as sports, pep rallies, chess clubs and the like.

III. REGULATIONS

- A. All hazing in public school sponsored student organizations or activities, including co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, is strictly forbidden. Students violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures which may include suspension and possible expulsion. Coaches and/or sponsors of student organizations who promote or tacitly allow such activity may be subject to disciplinary procedures which may include suspension and in extreme cases, dismissal.
- B. Each school shall inform all students and school personnel that hazing activities are strictly forbidden and students and staff may be subject to disciplinary procedures.
- C. Principals may temporarily suspend from school any student who fails to abide by the anti-hazing policy.
- D. Principals may recommend suspension from work any employee who fails to abide by the anti-hazing policy. That recommendation shall go to the superintendent.
- E. The Monroe County Board of Education, upon the superintendent's recommendation, may expel from school any student who fails to abide by the anti-hazing policy. Further, the Board, upon the superintendent's recommendation, may suspend without pay or dismiss any employee who fails to abide by the anti-hazing policy.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES/INVESTIGATION

Any person who believes he/she has been the victim of hazing by a student or an

employee is strongly encouraged to report the alleged acts immediately to the principal. The Board encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the building principal or the County Board of Education office.

- A. If the complaint involves an activity that is related to only an individual school, the complaint shall be filed with the principal who shall conduct the investigation.
- B. If the complaint involves an activity that involves more than one school, the complaint shall be filed with the principal and then forwarded to the superintendent who will designate an individual to conduct the investigation.
- C. In all cases, a report shall be prepared from the facts gathered from the investigation and submitted to the superintendent for review and recommendation.

V. TIME LINES FOR INVESTIGATION AND RECOMMENDATION

A complete investigation of any student-related or employee-related incidents shall be conducted within ten working days of the complaint being filed unless exceptional circumstances require additional time. The investigator shall provide a written report on the county form designated within five working days after the completion of the investigation.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged event(s) that prompted the complaint. The investigation may also incorporate other procedures and/or records that may be necessary to complete the investigation. School officials may, if necessary, take immediate steps to protect the individual(s) making the complaint prior to the completion of the investigation.

VI. NOTIFICATIONS

Each school shall notify students and employees of the anti-hazing policy.

VII. HAZING AS ABUSE

Under certain circumstances, hazing may constitute child abuse under Chapter 49 of the WV Code. In such situations, the school district shall comply with the provisions of law for reporting such abuse.

VIII. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy shall become effective immediately upon adoption - September 7, 1999

