

BULLYING AND HAZING

(Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)

Bullying is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited more than once toward a student or students. The behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for others.

Throughout board policy and regulations, the term bullying is used to mean harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Hazing means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of intimidation or harassment to any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person.

Harassing, hazing, intimidating, bullying and/or dating violence behavior by any student/school personnel at Eagle Wings Academy is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Harassment, hazing, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence means any intentional written, verbal, electronic, graphic or physical acts, including electronically transmitted acts, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to haze, harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity; in any Eagle Wings Academy publication; through the use of any school-owned or operated communication tools, including but not limited to school e-mail accounts and/or computers; on school-provided transportation. This does not include district-provided transportation of Eagle Wings Academy students to and from school. Any harassing, hazing, intimidating, bullying, and/or dating violence on district-wide transportation, will be referred to the responsible public school district(s) and will be subject to the district(s)'s policies, procedures, and disciplinary actions.

Prohibited activities of any type, including those activities engaged in via computer and/or electronic communications devices or electronic means, are inconsistent with the educational process and are prohibited at all times on school property, on district-wide transportation or at a school-sponsored activity. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying by an electronic act may be suspended and/or dismissed.

Hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying or dating violence can include many different behaviors. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and/or attacks;
2. threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
3. extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions;
4. exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors;

5. repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other web-based/online sites (also known as “cyber bullying”), such as the following:

- A. posting slurs on web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals;
- B. sending abusive or threatening e-mails, web site postings or comments and instant messages;
- C. using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs or videos of students and/or distributing or posting the photos or videos online;
- D. using web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals, e-mails or instant messages to circulate gossip and rumors to other students;

6. excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes hazing or bullying, special attention is paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

No administrator, teacher or other employee of Eagle Wings Academy shall encourage, permit, condone or tolerate any hazing and/or bullying activities. No students, including leaders of student organizations, are permitted to plan, encourage or engage in any hazing and/or bullying.

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing, bullying and/or dating violence does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

School Personnel Responsibilities and Complaint Procedures :

Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation and/or bullying, as defined above, promptly notify an administrator of the event observed, and promptly fill out an incident report concerning the events witnessed.

A. Investigation

The administrator is notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying. All such complaints are investigated promptly. The investigation may include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence were verified, and when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action. Where appropriate, written witness statements are attached to the incident report.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint is limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint.

Such limitation of the investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

B. Non-disciplinary Interventions

When verified acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence are identified early and/or when such verified acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of the behavior, its prohibition and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassing, hazing, intimidating, bullying and/or dating violence.

C. Disciplinary Interventions

When acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Eagle Wings Academy also reserved the right to inform the involved student(s)'s public school district(s). Students then may also be subject to their public school district(s) policies, procedures, and disciplinary actions. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, cannot provide the basis for disciplinary action.

Allegations of criminal misconduct are reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse is reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines. Eagle Wings Academy personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.

Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator:

If after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying by a specific student are verified, an administrator notifies the parent or guardian of the perpetrator, of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline is included in such notification.

Reports to the Victim and His/Her Parent or Guardian:

If after investigation, acts of bullying or hazing against a specific student are verified, an administrator notifies the parent/guardian of the victim of the finding. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator. Bullying matters, including the identity of both the charging party and the accused, are kept confidential to the extent possible. Although discipline may be imposed against the accused upon a finding of guilt, retaliation is prohibited.

Bullying Prevention:

Eagle Wings Academy includes, within the health curriculum, age-appropriate instruction in dating violence prevention education in grades 7 to 12. This instruction includes recognizing warning signs of dating violence and the characteristics of healthy relationships.

Administrators, teachers and all other school employees are particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events that might include hazing, bullying and/or dating violence. If hazing and/or bullying or planned hazing and/or bullying is discovered, involved students are informed by the discovering staff member of the prohibition contained in this policy and are required to end all hazing and/or bullying activities immediately. All hazing and/or bullying incidents are reported immediately to an administrator and appropriate discipline is administered.

The administration provides training on Eagle Wings Academy's hazing and bullying policy to employees who have direct contact with students. Additional training is provided to employees in violence and substance abuse prevention and positive youth development.

Eagle Wings Academy employees, and students have qualified civil immunity for damages arising from reporting an incident of hazing and/or bullying. No one is permitted to retaliate against an employee or student because he/she reports an instance of suspected bullying, or assists or participates in an investigation of hazing and/or bullying of an individual.

Administrators, teachers, other employees and students who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in compliance with State and Federal law.

The prohibition against hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying or dating violence is publicized in student handbooks and in the publications that set the standard of conduct for students at Eagle Wings Academy. In addition, information regarding the policy is incorporated into employee handbooks and training materials.

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