

LEBANON SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: 247
SECTION: PUPILS
TITLE: HAZING
ADOPTED: October 17, 2016
November 19, 2018

247. HAZING

Purpose

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

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, **hazing** is defined as any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person or 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. The term shall include, but not be limited to:¹

1. Any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding;
2. Forced calisthenics;
3. Exposure to the elements;
4. Forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance;
5. Any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual; or

¹ 24 P.S. 5352.

6. Any willful destruction or removal of public or private property.

For purposes of this definition, any activity, as described in this definition, upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be "forced" activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding.²

For purposes of this policy, **student activity or organization** is defined as any organization, team, club, society, or group operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the district.

Authority

The Board prohibits hazing in connection with any student activity or organization regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or outside of school hours.³

No student, parent/guardian, administrator, teacher, coach, sponsor, volunteer, or district employee shall plan, permit, direct, encourage, assist, engage in, condone, tolerate, or ignore any form of hazing.

The Board encourages students who have been subjected to hazing to promptly report such incidents to the building principal and/or a district employee.

Delegation of Responsibility

Students, parents/guardians, administrators, teachers, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, and district employees shall be alert to incidents of hazing and shall report such conduct to the building principal.

District administrators shall investigate promptly all complaints of hazing and administer appropriate discipline to any individual or student activity or organization who violates this policy.

Guidelines

In addition to posting this policy on the district's website, the district shall annually inform students, parents/guardians, sponsors, volunteers and district employees that hazing is prohibited, by means of:⁴

² 24 P.S. 5352.

³ 24 P.S. 511, 5354.

⁴ 24 P.S. 5354.

1. Distribution of written policy.
2. Publication in handbooks.
3. Verbal instructions by the coach or sponsor at the start of the season or program.

This policy, along with other applicable district policies, procedures and Codes of Conduct, shall be provided to all school athletic coaches and all sponsors and volunteers affiliated with a student activity or organization annually, prior to coaching an athletic activity or serving as a responsible adult supervising, advising, assisting or otherwise participating in a student activity or organization.⁵

Complaint Procedure/Consequences for Violations

1. When a student, administrator, coach, sponsor, volunteer, or other district employee believes that a person has been subject to hazing, the student, administrator, coach, sponsor, volunteer, or other district employee shall promptly report the incident, orally or in writing, to the building principal.
2. The principal shall conduct a timely, impartial, thorough, and comprehensive investigation of the alleged hazing.
3. The principal shall prepare a written report summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint. Findings of the investigation shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, and others directly involved, as appropriate.
4. If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the principal shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with district policy. Additionally, the perpetrator may be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or sponsor, up to and including removal from the activity.⁶
5. The district shall document the corrective action taken.
6. If the investigation results in a substantiated finding that a coach, sponsor, or volunteer affiliated with the student activity or organization planned, directed, encouraged, assisted, condoned or ignored any form of hazing, s/he will be disciplined appropriately.

⁵ 24 P.S. 511, 5354.

⁶ 24 P.S. 511, 5354.

Discipline could include, but is not limited to, dismissal from the position as coach, sponsor, volunteer and/or dismissal from district employment.

7. If the investigation results in a substantiated finding that the student activity or organization authorized hazing in blatant disregard of such rules, penalties may also include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to otherwise operate under the sanction or recognition of the Lebanon School District.
8. All penalties imposed under the authority of this section shall be in addition to any penalty imposed for violation of criminal laws of this Commonwealth or for violation of any other District rule to which the violator may be subject.⁷

⁷ 24 P.S.5353.