



I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and nurturing school environment that honors diversity and commonality. The Board believes that fostering a school climate where the worth and dignity of individuals are valued, and their safety and rights are protected, is essential to its mission. Behaviors that compromise the safety and well being of students, staff, and others, or that interfere with school operations will not be tolerated.

All students, parents, and employees of the Howard County Public School System share responsibility for the health, safety and general welfare of students. Employees bear a professional responsibility to monitor student behavior and respond accordingly to both observed and reported violations of policy.

Threats, profanity, defamation, harassment, intimidation, bullying, physical attacks, gang related activities, and hazing are prohibited in the Howard County Public School System. Students, employees and others engaging in these behaviors on school property or at school-related activities are subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. Students and employees who violate this policy are also subject to appropriate interventions and/or counseling. Any action in response to a violation of this policy should be carried out in accordance with relevant school system policies and applicable state and federal laws.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish expectations for behavior that encourage safe and nurturing school environments and to provide parameters for disciplinary and corrective responses to behavior that compromises the safety and well being of students, staff, and others.

III. Definitions

- A. Bullying – In accordance with the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005, intimidation/harassment (bullying) is conduct, including verbal conduct, that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student’s physical or psychological well-being, and is motivated by an actual or perceived personal characteristic such as race, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or disability, or is threatening or seriously intimidating.

- B. Cyber-bullying – Harassing, humiliating, intimidating, and/or threatening others on the Internet or via cell phones and other technology (e.g., emails, web pages, instant messaging).
- C. Defamation – False and unprivileged statements or representation about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning him, her, or them in the estimation of the community or deterring others from associating with or dealing with him, her, or them.
- D. Gang – Two or more individuals who associate and/or identify with each other, and have as a primary purpose harassment or intimidation and/or the planning, threat, attempt, or commission of criminal, delinquent, or illegal acts.
- E. Harassment – A sufficiently severe action or persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements, directed at an identifiable individual or group, that is intended to be, or which a reasonable person would perceive as, ridiculing or demeaning.
- F. Hazing – Participation in any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliation with, or maintenance of membership in an organization. This includes any action taken or situation created that directly or indirectly embarrasses, humiliates, harasses, ridicules, or causes harm or mental or physical discomfort to another.
- G. Intimidation – Engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.
- H. Physical Attack – Unwelcome aggressive action, with physical contact, directed at another person, student or non-student, on school property or at a school-related activity.
- I. Profanity – Vulgar or abusive language; cursing; swearing.
- J. School Property – Any property owned or leased by the Howard County Public School System. The concept of property shall extend to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, proms at hotels, etc. This means that when a facility is scheduled by the school system for student use, it will be considered an extension of school property.
- K. School-related Activity – Any school system activity, whether held on or off school property, in which a student directly participates (e.g., school field trip, athletic event, or class/graduation activity), or in which the student does not

directly participate but represents the school or student body simply by being there (e.g., spectator at a school event).

- L. Third Party – Parents, mentors, volunteers, vendors, contractors and others with whom students or employees interact during school or school-related activities.
- M. Threat – Expression, conveyed by word or action, of intent to do harm to another.

IV. Standards

- A. Students, parents, and employees of the Howard County Public School System all contribute to the development and implementation of safe school environments. In addition to this policy, expectations for behavior that encourages a safe and nurturing school environment can be found in Policy 1000, Civility, and in the Student Code of Conduct.
- B. Notice that profanity, threats, defamation, harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, physical attacks, gang-related activities, and hazing are prohibited in the Howard County Public School System shall be communicated to all students, parents, employees, and third parties annually.
- C. The following are violations of this policy:
 - 1. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, employee, or third party to use profanity, or to threaten, defame, harass, intimidate, bully, cyber-bully, or physically attack another when these actions occur on school property, on a school bus, at a school bus stop, or in connection with any school-related activity. These behaviors shall also constitute a violations of this policy when they have a direct effect on the order and general welfare of the school (such as negatively affecting the safety or learning environment of a classroom), even when they do not occur on school property or at a school-related activity.
 - 2. Hazing shall be a violation of this policy when committed with respect to a school-related organization, club, or athletic team.
 - 3. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, employee, or third party to engage in behavior on school property or at school-related activities that represents affiliation with a gang. This includes, but is not limited to, wearing gang-related clothing or “colors,” committing vandalism through the use of graffiti depicting gang signs, exposing tattoos that represent gang affiliation, and engaging in the recruitment of gang members.
- D. All reported violations of this policy will be investigated.

- E. A violation of this policy against a student by a school system employee or third party may constitute child abuse. Any suspicion of child abuse should be reported and addressed in accordance with Policy 1030, Child Abuse and Neglect.
- F. Conduct that is discriminatory in nature should be addressed under Policy 1010, Discrimination. Sexual harassment should be addressed under Policy 1020, Sexual Harassment.
- G. The school system will comply with the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005.
- H. If a determination is made that a student, employee, or third party has been the object of or has been affected by conduct prohibited under this policy, the individual will be contacted to discuss the availability of appropriate assistance.
- I. A student, employee, or third party engaging in behaviors which violate this policy is subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. Interventions will be recommended, as appropriate, for students and employees who violate this policy.
- J. Consequences for a student, employee, or third party who violates this policy will be imposed according to applicable school system policies (Policy 9200, Discipline; Policy 7030, Employee Discipline; Student Code of Conduct) and other applicable state and federal laws.
- K. Violations of this policy are cumulative; subsequent offenses may affect the nature and severity of the consequences.
- L. The school system shall report any criminal activity, including child abuse, to the appropriate social service and law enforcement agencies.

V. Compliance

- A. The Superintendent/designee is responsible for implementing procedures that will ensure that students, parents, employees, and third parties are notified of the provisions of this policy annually.
- B. School or central office administrators are responsible for offering appropriate assistance to students, employees, parents, or third parties who have been the object of or affected by behavior prohibited in this policy.
- C. The Superintendent/designee will report incidents of bullying to the Maryland State Department of Education as stipulated in the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005.

- D. School principals are responsible for complying with the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 with regard to investigating and reporting incidents of bullying.
- E. Any action taken in response to a violation of this policy is the responsibility of the school administrator or Superintendent/designee and should be in accordance with Policy 9200, Discipline; the Student Code of Conduct; the Procedures for the Threat Management Process; and Policy 7030, Employee Discipline.
- F. School administrators and/or the Superintendent/designee may recommend appropriate interventions for students and employees who violate this policy.
- G. School administrators and/or the Superintendent/designee shall report all illegal behavior to the appropriate social service and/or law enforcement agency.

VI. Delegation of Authority

The superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for the implementation of this policy.

VII. References

- A. Legal
 - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1681
 - Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C., Sec 601 and Sec. 2000e.2
 - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 7-304 (Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions).
 - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 7-305 (Suspensions and Expulsions).
 - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 7-421 (Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005).
 - COMAR 13A.01.04.03, School Safety
 - COMAR13A.08.01.11, Disciplinary Action
 - COMAR 13A.08.04.03, Student Behavior Interventions
- B. Other Board Policies
 - Policy 1000 Civility
 - Policy 1010 Discrimination
 - Policy 1020 Sexual Harassment
 - Policy 1030 Child Abuse and Neglect
 - Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
 - Policy 7030 Employee Discipline
 - Policy 9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
 - Policy 9200 Discipline

Policy 9210 Dress Code

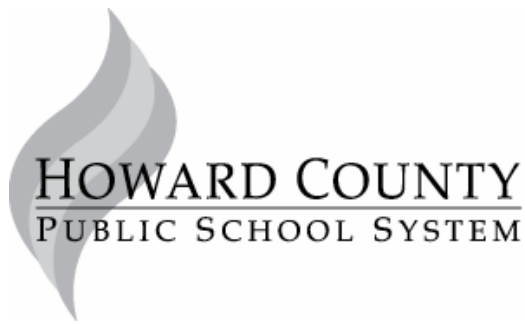
- C. Other
Procedures for the Threat Management Process
Student Code of Conduct

ADOPTED: October 22, 1992

AMENDED: January 30, 2001

April 12, 2007

EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2007



POLICY 1040-PR
IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES
SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Effective: July 1, 2007

I. Announcement/Dissemination of Information

- A. Written notice that profanity, threats, defamation, harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, physical attacks, gang-related activities, and hazing are prohibited in the Howard County Public School System must be provided to students and/or parents at or near the beginning of each school year and, upon registration, to new students and their parents.
- B. The principal or appropriate supervisor will periodically notify students, parents, employees, and third parties of the general provisions of this policy. Notification may be:
 - 1. Given via announcement over the school public address system as deemed appropriate by the principal
 - 2. Published in newsletters, on the school/system websites, and/or in student/employee handbooks
 - 3. Posted on bulletin boards in offices and other commonly used areas.

II. Violations of Policy

A. Student Violations

The individual who believes that a student has violated this policy should first consider whether the behavior constitutes a violation of Policy 1030, Child Abuse and Neglect; Policy 1010, Discrimination; or Policy 1020, Sexual Harassment. Violations of those policies must be reported and investigated and in accordance with those policies and applicable disciplinary procedures must be followed. When the provisions of these policies do not take precedence, the following procedures should be followed:

- 1. A student who is suspected of violating this policy will be referred to a school administrator.
- 2. The school administrator will promptly conduct an investigation of the alleged violation and take appropriate action to address the behavior as quickly as possible.

3. If the investigation reveals that a violation of policy has occurred, the administrator will notify the student's parents and take appropriate action using the Howard County Student Code of Conduct and in accordance with Policy 9200, Discipline; the Procedures for the Threat Management Process; and the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005.
4. A student who violates this policy is also subject to interventions designated by the school administrator or the Superintendent/designee designed to increase understanding of the impact of the offense on the victim(s).
5. A student who violates this policy may also be subject to criminal or other legal action.
6. Any student who has been the object of or who has been affected by conduct prohibited in this policy will be contacted by the school administrator or the Superintendent/designee so that appropriate assistance may be offered.

B. Employee and Third Party Violations

The individual who believes that an employee or third party has violated this policy should first consider whether the behavior constitutes a violation of Policy 1030, Child Abuse and Neglect; Policy 1010, Discrimination; or Policy 1020, Sexual Harassment. Violations of those policies must be reported and investigated and in accordance with those policies and applicable disciplinary procedures must be followed. When the provisions of these policies do not take precedence, the following procedures should be followed:

1. An employee or third party suspected of violating this policy will be referred to an appropriate supervisor or the Superintendent/designee.
2. The supervisor or Superintendent/designee will promptly conduct an investigation and address the behavior as quickly as possible.
3. If the investigation reveals that a violation has occurred, the supervisor or Superintendent/designee will take appropriate action. Disciplinary action against an employee, if appropriate, will be taken in accordance with Policy 7030, Employee Discipline. Action against a third party will be taken in accordance with relevant school system policies and other applicable state and federal laws.

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