

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: **5000**
CATEGORY: **Students**
POLICY CODE: **5131.91/Hazing**

HAZING

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Trumbull Public Schools that no student or adult shall participate in or be a member of any secret fraternity, sorority, or secret organization that is in any degree related to the school or to a school activity. No student or adult organization or any person associated with any organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education shall engage or participate in hazing.

“Hazing” is defined as any activity which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation into, admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education.

“Endanger the mental health” shall include, but is not limited to, any activity, except those activities authorized by law, which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged 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.

“Endanger the physical health” shall include, but is not limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as: whipping; beating; branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled dangerous substance; or any other forced physical activity which would adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual.

Any hazing activity upon which the initiation into, admission into or affiliation with, or condition for continued membership in, an organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education is conditioned, directly or indirectly, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if the student willingly participates in such activity.

This policy is not intended to deprive appropriate Board employees from taking necessary and appropriate disciplinary action toward any student or employee.

Students or employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension and expulsion for students and termination for employees.

Adopted: 8/15/2000
Revised: 5/26/2020

References

- Connecticut General Statutes § 53-23a
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 5131: Student Standard of Conduct

Regulations

I. Definitions

“Hazing” is defined as any activity which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation into, admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education. The term includes, but is not limited to:

- A. Requiring indecent exposure of the body;
- B. Requiring any activity that would subject the person to extreme mental or physical stress, such as, but not limited to, sleep deprivation, extended isolation from social contact, exposure to inclement weather, or any activity that would adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of the individual;
- C. Confinement of the person to unreasonably small, unventilated, unsanitary, unlighted, or restricted areas;
- D. Any assault upon the person, including, but not limited, any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, or placing a harmful substance on the body;
- E. Requiring the ingestion of any substance or any other physical activity which could adversely affect the health or safety of the individual.
- F. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, that adversely affects the mental or physical health or dignity of the student, or discourages the student from remaining in school or in the organization.
- G. Any activity that causes or requires the individual to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of Board policies or regulations.

II. Reporting Procedures

- A. Any person who believes he/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 Trumbull Public Schools employee 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 Assistant Superintendent or to the Superintendent.
- C. Teachers, coaches, athletic directors, 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 reporter's or potential victim's future grades, activity participation, employment, or work assignments.

III. Investigation Procedure

- A. All reports of hazing will be investigated by the school principal. During the investigation, steps should be taken, when necessary, to protect the reporter, potential victim, and/or others. The Superintendent may authorize a third-party investigation instead of or in addition to the school principal's investigation.
- B. A written report on the investigation and its results will be submitted to the Superintendent. Where potential violations of criminal law may have occurred, the principal or Superintendent shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- C. Students or employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension and expulsion for students and termination for employees. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior.

IV. Reprisal

The District will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, coach, athletic director, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the 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.

V. Dissemination of Policy

This policy, in its entirety, must be published in each school's student handbook. It is the responsibility of the lead advisor/coach for each school club, organization, or athletic team to explain this policy to all student and adult participants on a regular basis, including, at minimum, when the club, organization, or athletic team begins its work each year or season.