



## POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mike McDonough, Deputy Superintendent  
Friday, May 15, 2020, via Zoom

Hilliard City School District  
Operations Department

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### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Paul Lambert, Board of Education  
Lisa Whiting, Board of Education  
Brian Wilson, Treasurer/CFO  
Mike McDonough, Deputy Superintendent  
Vicky Clark, Assistant Superintendent  
Herb Higginbotham, Director Elementary Education  
Stacie Raterman, Communications Director

Aaron Cookson, Principal Hilliard Davidson HS  
Matthew Trombitas, Principal Hilliard Heritage MS  
Lauren Schmidt, Principal Hilliard Station Sixth Grade  
Holly Meister, Principal Scioto Darby Elementary  
Stephanie Borlaza, Principal Britton Elementary  
Jamie Lennox, Special Education Coordinator

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# RECOMMENDATION

Second Reading  
June 1, 2020

The Policy Review Committee meets quarterly each school year. All proposed new policies, revisions of current policies or repeal of a current policy are reviewed by the Policy Review Committee before being presented to the Superintendent for submission to the Board of Education. Two readings at two separate meetings shall normally be required before a new or revised policy may be adopted. Action to adopt will take place at a subsequent third meeting. However, the Board does have the option of voting for adoption at the second meeting.

The Policy Review Committee recommends the policies listed below be revised, as noted on the following pages:

1. BDC-Executive Sessions
2. BDDG-Minutes
3. GBCB-Staff-Student Relations
4. IJA-Career Advising
5. IKFC-Graduation Plans and Students at Risk of Not Qualifying for a High School Diploma
6. JED-Student Absences and Excuses
7. JEE-Student Attendance Accounting
8. JFCF-Hazing and Bullying
9. JFCF-R-Hazing and Bullying
10. JM-Staff-Student Relations

### Revision Notes:

- Language with a ~~line drawn through it~~ is language to be removed.
- Language in **bold-type** is language to be added.

The policies are being submitted for readings and adoption at the following Board of Education meetings:

- First reading – May 26, 2020
  - Second reading – June 1, 2020
  - Third reading and adoption – June 15, 2020
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## EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

Educational matters should be discussed and decisions made at public meetings of the Board (in accordance with the rationale for the creation of public governing bodies). Some matters are more properly discussed by the Board in executive session. As permitted by law, such matters may involve:

1. the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of an employee ~~or, official, or student~~ or the investigation of charges or complaints against such individual, unless an employee, official or student requests a public hearing (the Board will not hold an executive session for the discipline of one of its members for conduct related to the performance of his/her official duties or for his/her removal from office);
2. the purchase of property for public purposes or for the sale of property at competitive bidding, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest;
3. specialized details of security arrangements where disclosure of the matters discussed might reveal information that could be used for the purpose of committing or avoiding prosecution for, a violation of the law;
4. matters required to be kept confidential by Federal law or State statutes;
5. preparing for, conducting or reviewing negotiations with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment;
6. in-person conferences with an attorney for the Board concerning disputes involving the Board that are the subject of pending or imminent court action or
7. consideration of confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance, or negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance provided that:
  - A. the information is directly related to a request for economic development assistance that is to be provided or administered under provisions of State law authorized in Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(8)(1), or involves public infrastructure improvements or the extension of utility services that are directly related to an economic development project and

- B. a unanimous quorum of the Board has determined by a roll call vote the executive session is necessary to protect the interests of the applicant or possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with the economic development project.

Conferences with a member of the Office of the State Auditor or an appointed certified public accountant for the purpose of an audit are not considered meetings subject to the Sunshine Law.

The Board meets in executive session only to discuss legally authorized matters. Executive sessions are held only as part of a regular or special meeting and only after a majority of the “quorum” determines, by a roll-call vote, to hold such a session.

When the Board holds an executive session for any of the reasons stated above, the motion and vote to hold the executive session shall state one or more of the purposes listed under such paragraph for which the executive session is to be held, but need not include the name of any person to be considered in the executive session. The minutes shall reflect the information described above.

In compliance with law, no official action may be taken in executive session. To take final action on any matter discussed, the Board reconvenes into public session.

The Board may invite staff members or others to attend executive sessions at its discretion.

Board members shall not disclose or use, without appropriate authorization, any information acquired in the course of official duties (which is confidential because of statutory provisions) or which has been clearly designated as confidential because of the status of proceedings or the circumstances under which the information was received.

[Adoption date: August 14, 2001]

[Re-adoption date: November 25, 2013]

[Re-adoption date: May 11, 2015]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 102.03  
121.22

CROSS REFS.: AFBA, Evaluation of the Treasurer (Also BCCB)  
BCD, Board-Superintendent Relationship (Also CBI)  
BCE, Board Committees  
BCF, Advisory Committees to the Board  
BD, School Board Meetings  
BDDG, Minutes  
KBA, Public’s Right to Know  
KLD, Public Complaints About District Personnel

## MINUTES

The minutes of Board meetings constitute the written record of Board action. Therefore, the Treasurer shall record in the minutes of each meeting all actions taken by the Board.

~~The minutes of each Board meeting shall include:~~

- ~~1. the nature of the meeting (regular or special), the time, the place, members present and the approval of minutes of preceding meeting(s);~~
- ~~2. a complete record of all official action taken by the Board relative to all business transacted;~~
- ~~3. items of information bearing on action and~~
- ~~4. record of adjournment.~~

**Full and accurate minutes must contain sufficient facts and information to permit the public to understand and appreciate the rationale behind the Board's decisions.**

~~The Treasurer shall include the motion, the name of the member making the motion, the name of the member seconding it and the record of the vote on the motion.~~

The minutes shall be signed by the Board President and attested by the Treasurer as to the accuracy of the information contained, following their approval by the Board at a subsequent meeting. The attestation is not an authorization of any action taken or not taken during the meeting.

As permitted by law, the reading of the minutes at Board meetings may be waived, provided that copies of the minutes have been distributed to all members of the Board at least two days prior to the date of the next succeeding meeting and that copies of such-minutes are made available to the public and news media.

The approved, official minutes shall be kept the office of the Treasurer who, after they have been read and approved by the Board, shall make them available to ~~interested citizens~~ **the public and news media** upon request during normal office hours. Copies of the approved minutes shall be provided at a cost.

[Adoption date: August 14, 2001]

[Re-adoption date: May 11, 2015]

[Re-adoption date: November 12, 2018]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 121.22  
149.43  
3313.26

CROSS REFS.: BCE, Board Committees  
BD, School Board Meetings  
KBA, Public's Right to Know

DRAFT

## STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to make themselves familiar with, and to abide by, the laws of the state of Ohio, and the negotiated agreement, the policies of the Board and the administrative regulations designed to implement them. **All educators also are required to comply with the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.**

The Board expects staff members to conduct themselves in a professional manner which not only reflects credit to the District, but also presents a model worthy of emulation by students. Unless otherwise permitted by law, staff members are not permitted to bring a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance into a school safety zone.

All staff members are expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities. Essential to the success of the instructional program in conjunction with ongoing operations, the following specific responsibilities are required of all personnel:

1. attendance at work;
2. support and enforcement of policies and regulations;
3. diligence in submitting required reports;
4. care and protection of District property and
5. concern and attention toward their own and the District's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students.

[Adoption date: August 14, 2001]

[Re-adoption date: July 26, 2004]

[Re-adoption date: October 13, 2008]

[Re-adoption date: May 11, 2015]

LEGAL REFS.: Gun-Free Schools Act; 20 USC 7151  
Gun-Free School Zones Act; 18 USC 922  
ORC 124.34  
2923.1210; 2923.1212; 2923.122  
3319.081; 3319.16; 3319.31; 3319.311; 3319.36  
OAC Chapter 3301-73

CROSS REFS.: GBCA, Staff Conflict of Interest  
GBH, Staff-Student Relations  
JFC, Student Conduct (Zero Tolerance)  
JHF, Student Safety  
KGB, Public Conduct on District Property

DRAFT

## STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONS

The relationship between the District's staff and students must be one of cooperation, understanding and mutual respect. Staff members have a responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning and to motivate each student to perform to his/her capacity.

Staff members should strive to secure individual and group discipline, and should be treated with respect by students at all times. By the same token, staff members should extend to students the same respect and courtesy that they, as staff members, have a right to demand.

Although it is desired that staff members have a sincere interest in students as individuals, partiality and the appearance of impropriety must be avoided. Staff must maintain an appropriate relationship with all students at all times, both in and outside the classroom. Excessive informal and/or social involvement with students is prohibited. Such conduct is not compatible with professional ethics and, as such, will not be tolerated.

Staff members are expected to use good judgment in their relationships with students both inside and outside of the school context including, but not limited to, the following guidelines.

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school, its staff and/or other students.
2. The exchange of purchased gifts between staff members and students is discouraged.
3. Staff-sponsored parties at which students are in attendance, unless they are a part of the school's extracurricular program and are properly supervised, are prohibited.
4. Staff members shall not solicit, encourage, engage, or consummate an inappropriate relationship with a student or minor.
5. Staff members shall not associate with students at any time in any situation or activity that could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
6. **Soliciting, encouraging, engaging or consummating an inappropriate relationship with any student, minor or individual who was a student in the preceding 12 months** ~~Dating between staff members and students~~ is prohibited.
7. Staff members shall not use **disparaging remarks**, insults or sarcasm against students **under any circumstances as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations.**
8. Staff members shall maintain **appropriate professional, emotional and social boundaries in a reasonable standard of care for** the supervision, control and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.



9. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
10. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse or neglect.
11. Staff members shall not attempt to diagnose or treat a student's personal problem relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health and/or family relationships but, instead, should refer the student to the appropriate individual or agency for assistance.
12. Staff members shall not **willingly or knowingly violate any student confidentiality required by Federal or State law.** ~~disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health and/or family background.~~
13. **Staff members shall not groom a student or minor for the purpose of establishing an inappropriate emotional, romantic or sexual relationship.**

#### Social Media

1. District staff are prohibited from posting data, documents, photographs or inappropriate information on any social media platform that might result in a disruption of classroom activity or that violates State or Federal law relating to staff and student privacy. The Superintendent/designee has full discretion in determining when a disruption of classroom activity has occurred.
2. District staff are prohibited from providing personal district social media passwords to students.
3. Communications between District staff and students via the internet, personal email accounts, text messaging, apps, personal social media and other modes of personal technology are discouraged. Staff members shall not solicit, encourage, engage, or consummate an inappropriate relationship with a student or minor through the use of technology.
4. Regarding District-approved social media, District staff may communicate with current students only under those circumstances approved by the District. Teachers are limited to communicating with students regarding matters relevant to a student's classwork. Staff with extra-curricular responsibilities are limited to communicating with students about the team they coach or the school activity they advise.

Violation of the prohibitions listed above **will may** result in staff and/or student discipline in accordance with State law, Board policies and regulations, the staff and student codes of conduct and handbooks and/or staff negotiated agreements. **Violations by staff also may be reported to the Ohio Department of Education for further investigation.** Nothing in this policy prohibits District staff and students from the use of education websites and/or use of social media created for curricular, cocurricular or extracurricular purposes.

[Adoption date: February 10, 2020]

LEGAL REF.: ORC 3313.20; 3319.31; 3319.311  
OAC Chapter 3301-73

CROSS REFS.: GBCA, Staff Conflict of Interest  
GBCB, Staff Conduct  
GBI, Staff Gifts and Solicitations  
IIBH, District Websites  
JFC, Student Conduct (Zero Tolerance)  
JFCF, Hazing and Bullying  
JG, Student Discipline  
JHF, Student Safety  
JHG, Reporting Child Abuse  
JL, Student Gifts and Solicitations  
JO, Student Records  
KBA, Public's Right to Know  
Staff Handbooks  
Student Handbooks  
Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators

CONTRACT REFS.: Teachers' Negotiated Agreement  
Support Staff Negotiated Agreement

## CAREER ADVISING

The Board views career advising as helping students understand themselves relative to their abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, strengths and limitations. This process is meant to assist students in the development of their potential and their decisions relating to educational and career matters. **This policy is supplemented by student graduation plans developed in accordance with the law.**

This policy is reviewed biennially and made available to students, parents, guardians/custodians, local postsecondary institutions and residents of the District. This policy is posted in a prominent location on the District website.

The District will do all of the following:

1. Provide students with grade-level examples linking schoolwork to one or more career field(s) through use of the State Board adopted career connections.
2. Create a plan to provide career advising to students in grades six through 12.
3. Provide additional interventions and career advising for students who are identified as at risk of dropping out of school using both research- and locally-based methods developed with input from classroom teachers and guidance counselors.
4. Train employees on advising students on career pathways, including the use of online tools.
5. Develop multiple, clear academic pathways students can use to earn a high school diploma.
6. Identify and publicize courses in which students can earn both traditional academic and career-technical credit.
7. Document career advising provided to each student.
8. Prepare students for their transition from high school to their postsecondary destinations.

Student success plans (SSP) are developed for students identified as at risk of dropping out of school. A SSP identifies the student's chosen academic pathway to graduation and the role of career-technical and competency based education and experiential learning, as appropriate in that chosen pathway. The student's parents, guardians or custodians are invited to assist in the development of the SSP. A copy of the SSP, a statement regarding the importance of a high school diploma and the academic pathways available to the student for successful graduation are

provided to parents, guardians or custodians who do not participate in development of the student's SSP. Following SSP development, the District provides career advising aligned with the student's individual plan and the District's plan for career advising.

[Adoption date: May 11, 2015]

LEGAL REF.: ORC 3313.617; 3313.6020

CROSS REFS.: AFI, Evaluation of Educational Resources  
IJ, Guidance Program  
IKFC, Graduation Plans and Students at Risk of Not Qualifying for a  
High School Diploma  
IL, Testing Programs  
JK, Employment of Students

**NEW POLICY**

GRADUATION PLANS AND STUDENTS AT RISK OF NOT QUALIFYING FOR A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

The Board desires that all students are able to earn a high school diploma. Recognizing students may be at risk of not earning a high school diploma, the Board adopts the following policy.

Graduation Plans

Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, the District develops a graduation plan for each student enrolled in grades nine through 12 to address the student's academic pathway to meet the curriculum requirements specified by the District and to satisfy the applicable graduation requirements.

The plan is developed jointly by the student and a representative of the District and updated each school year in which the student is enrolled in the District until the student qualifies for a high school diploma. The District invites the student's parent, guardian or custodian to assist in developing and updating the graduation plan.

Graduation plans supplement the Board-adopted career advising policy.

A student's individualized education plan (IEP) may be used in lieu of a graduation plan when the IEP contains academic goals substantively similar to a graduation plan.

At-Risk Students

The Board directs the Superintendent/designee to develop criteria for identifying students at risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma. This criteria at minimum includes a student's lack of progress on the graduation plan developed by the District in accordance with law. The criteria also may include other factors such as student absences or misconduct and other factors deemed appropriate by the administration.

The Board directs the Superintendent/designee to develop procedures for identifying at risk students. These procedures must include a method for determining if a student is not making adequate progress in meeting the terms of the student's graduation plan. Procedures must allow for identification of students as at risk in any of grades nine through 12 and may include identification of students in other grades.

The District provides written notice to the parent, guardian or custodian of an at-risk student in each year a student has been identified as at risk. This written notice includes all of the following:

1. A statement that the student is at risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma;

2. A description of the District's or school's curriculum requirements, or the student's IEP, and, as appropriate, the applicable graduation conditions of State law;
3. A description of any additional instructional or support services available to the at-risk student through the District or school.

The District assists students at risk of not graduating with additional instructional or support services to help the student qualify for a high school diploma. These services may include any of the following:

1. Mentoring programs;
2. Tutoring programs;
3. High school credit through demonstrations of subject area competency;
4. Adjusted curriculum options;
5. Career-technical programs;
6. Mental health services;
7. Physical health care services;
8. Family engagement and support services.

[Adoption date:]

LEGAL REF.: ORC 3313.617; 3313.618; 3313.619; 3313.6020

CROSS REFS.: IJA, Career Advising  
IKF, Graduation Requirements

## STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Achievement and attendance are highly correlated. Each student should attempt to attend school daily. Rules and regulations regarding excessive absenteeism and tardiness shall be enforced.

Parents and/or guardians are legally responsible for the student's attendance in school; therefore, the parent or guardian of any student is required to accompany the student to the school's attendance office each time the student has accumulated five days of unexcused absence in a semester. If the school has no attendance office, the principal's office shall serve as such.

Students are required to be in their designated place at all times during the school day. Any student found otherwise shall be considered truant and shall be subject to the same policies and procedures as out-of-school truancy.

### Family Trips

It is recognized that planned family trips often provide enrichment to regular classroom instruction. It is further recognized that employers cannot always grant vacation periods which fall within the school vacation and holiday period, and for families to be together, some trips must necessarily be scheduled during the academic year. Application for approval (JED-E) must be made by a parent or guardian at least two weeks in advance. If the student is not a member of the immediate family, his/her parent or guardian must complete the application. Each student is limited to one approved trip of 10 school days or less per school year without loss of academic standing, provided proper assignment make-up work is completed, including tests and final examinations. More than one trip with a cumulative of 10 days or less may be approved by the building principal or his/her designee. Trips of more than 10 school days shall not be approved except in extraordinary circumstances as determined by the building principal or his/her designee. If a student is absent for family travel outside of the ten (10) days of excused absences allowed by the District, he/she will be considered unexcused from school and subject to truancy regulations. The school district may be obligated to report the parent/guardian to the Franklin County Juvenile Court System and file charges of lack of compliance with the compulsory education rules. Communication with the school and family is crucial and attempts can be made to design online or other opportunities when applicable.

### **Medically** Excused Absence

**Medically** Excused absences shall be those that are included as reason for absence according to the Ohio Revised Code. These reasons are:

1. Personal illness. The approving authority may require a medical certification if he/she deems it advisable.

2. Illness in the family. The absence under this condition shall not apply to children under fourteen years of age.
3. Quarantine of the home. The absence of a child from school under this condition is limited to the length of quarantine as fixed by the proper health officials.
4. ~~Death of a relative. The absence arising from this situation is limited to a period of 18 hours unless a reasonable cause may be shown for a longer absence.~~
5. ~~Work at home due to absence of parents or guardians for a limited period of time when approved by the Superintendent/designee.~~
6. ~~Observance of religious holidays. Any child of any religious faith shall be excused if his/her creed or belief.~~
- 4.7. Emergency or set of circumstances which in the judgment of the Superintendent/designee constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school **which may include but not be limited to absences due to documented medical appointments.**
8. ~~Field trips or school activities. Absence as a result of an approved field trip or school-sanctioned or sponsored activity shall be an excused absence.~~
9. ~~College visitation.~~
10. ~~Absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status.~~
11. ~~Absences due to a student being homeless.~~

### **Nonmedically Excused Absence**

**Reasons for which students may be nonmedically excused include, but are not limited to:**

- 1. needed at home to perform necessary work directly and exclusively for parents or legal guardians for a limited period of time when approved by the Superintendent (applies to students over 14 years of age only);**
- 2. death in the family (applies to absences of up to 18 school hours unless a reasonable cause may be shown for a longer absence);**
- 3. observance of religious holidays consistent with a student's truly held religious belief;**



4. **traveling out of state to attend a Board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (applies to absences of up to 24 school hours);**
5. **college visitation;**
6. **absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status;**
7. **absences due to a student being homeless or**
8. **as determined by the Superintendent.**

The District makes an attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or other person having care of a student who has not notified the school of the student's absence that day regarding that student's **unexcused** absence **without legitimate excuse** within 120 minutes of the start of the school day. The Board authorizes the Superintendent/designee to determine and use the appropriate notification procedure and methods consistent with State law.

Each student who is absent must immediately, upon return to school, make arrangements with his/her teacher(s) to make up work missed. Students who are absent from school for reasons not permitted by State law may, or may not, be permitted to make up work. Each case is considered on its merits by the principal and the respective teacher(s). Students who are absent due to an in-school or out-of-school suspension are permitted to make up missed classroom assignments in accordance with District level policies and procedures.

#### Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence, whether resulting from truancy or other unacceptable reasons, eliminates the opportunity to earn credit for work missed. This shall not preclude the student from completing assignments to keep current.

Disciplinary action may result from unexcused absence.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent/designee to establish a hearing and notification procedure for the purpose of denying a student's driving privileges if that student of compulsory school age has been absent without legitimate excuse for more than 60 consecutive hours during a school month or a total of at least 90 hours during a school year.

[Adoption date: August 14, 2001]  
[Re-adoption date: January 28, 2008]  
[Re-adoption date: November 12, 2014]

[Re-adoption date: May 11, 2015]  
[Re-adoption date: July 8, 2015]  
[Re-adoption date: February 6, 2017]  
[Re-adoption date: April 17, 2017]  
[Re-adoption date: May 14, 2018]  
[Re-adoption date: May 13, 2019]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3313.609; 3313.66  
3319.16  
3321.01; 3321.03; 3321.04; 3321.13; 3321.14; 3321.141; 3321.19;  
3321.38  
4510.32  
OAC 3301-69-02

CROSS REFS.: IGAC, Teaching About Religion  
IKB, Homework  
JEDB, Student Dismissal Precautions  
JEE, Student Attendance Accounting (Missing and Absent Children)  
JHC, Student Health Services and Requirements  
JHCC, Communicable Diseases

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING (Missing and Absent Children)

The Board believes in the importance of trying to decrease the number of missing children; therefore, efforts are made to identify missing children and to notify the proper adults or agencies.

Except where required by State law, at the time of initial entry into school, a student shall present to the person in charge of admission an official copy of a birth certificate and copies of those records pertaining to him/her which were maintained by the school that he/she most recently attended. In lieu of a birth certificate, birth documentation may include:

1. a passport or attested transcript thereof filed with a registrar of passports at a point of entry of the United States showing the date and place of birth of the child;
2. an attested transcript of the certificate of birth;
3. an attested transcript of the certificate of baptism or other religious record showing the date and place of birth of the child;
4. an attested transcript of a hospital record showing the date and place of birth of the child or
5. a birth affidavit.

Except where required by State law, if the student does not present copies of the required documents, the district representative shall call the school from which the student transferred and request the information. If that district has no record on file of the student or if that district does not send the records within 14 days, the district representative shall notify the police department having jurisdiction in the area where the student resides of the possibility that the student might be a missing child.

The primary responsibility for supervision of a student resides with his/her parent(s). The staff provides as much assistance as is reasonable to parents with this responsibility.

Parents must notify the school on the day a student is absent unless previous notification has been given in accordance with school procedure for excused absences. The District makes an attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or other person having care of a student who has not notified the school of the student's absence that day regarding that student's **unexcused** absence **without legitimate excuse** within 120 minutes of the start of the school day. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to determine and use the appropriate notification procedure and methods consistent with State law.

Parents or other responsible persons shall provide the school with their current home and/or work telephone numbers, home addresses and any emergency telephone numbers.

The Board designates the Superintendent/designee to develop informational programs for students, parents and community members relative to the subject of missing children.

[Adoption date: August 14, 2001]

[Re-adoption date: May 11, 2015]

[Re-adoption date: July 8, 2015]

[Re-adoption date: May 13, 2019]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 109.65  
2901.30  
3313.205; 3313.672; 3313.96  
3319.321; 3319.322  
3321.12; 3321.141  
3705.05

CROSS REFS.: JEC, School Admission  
JECAA, Admission of Homeless Students  
JED, Student Absences and Excuses  
JEDB, Student Dismissal Precautions  
JHF, Student Safety

## HAZING AND BULLYING (Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)

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

Throughout this policy the term bullying is used in place of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once. The intentional act also includes violence within a dating relationship. 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 the other student. This behavior is prohibited on school property, on a school bus or at any school-sponsored activity. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying by an electronic act may be suspended. **Discipline procedures will not infringe on any student's rights under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.**

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.

The District 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.

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. The District educates minors about appropriate online behavior, including but not limited to, interacting with other individuals on social networking and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

No administrator, teacher or other employee of the District 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.

Administrators, teachers and all other District employees are particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events that might include hazing, bullying and/or dating violence. If any of the prohibited behaviors are planned or discovered, involved students are informed by the discovering District employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and are required to end all such activities immediately. All hazing, bullying and/or dating violence incidents are reported immediately to the principal/designee and appropriate discipline is administered.

School administrators shall notify the parents/guardians of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence and the parents/guardians of students against whom such acts were committed, and shall allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by law.

The Superintendent/designee will provide the Board with a summary of all reported incidents two times per year and post the summary on the District's website, to the extent permitted by law.

The administration provides training on the District's hazing and bullying policy to District employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students and by November 30 annually reports to the Ohio Department of Education compliance with this requirement through the consolidated school mandate report. If the District reports noncompliance the Superintendent/designee must provide a written explanation to the Board within 30 days explaining this noncompliance and a written plan of action for accurately and efficiently addressing the problem.

Additional training is provided to employees in violence and substance abuse prevention and positive youth development.

District employees, students and volunteers have qualified civil immunity for damages arising from reporting an incident of hazing and/or bullying. 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.

No one is permitted to retaliate against an employee or student because he/she files a grievance or assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding the charge of hazing and/or bullying of an individual.

[Adoption date: August 14, 2001]  
[Re-adoption date: January 24, 2005]  
[Re-adoption date: April 12, 2005]  
[Re-adoption date: April 9, 2007]  
[Re-adoption date: January 28, 2008]  
[Re-adoption date: April 26, 2010]  
[Re-adoption date: April 25, 2012]  
[Re-adoption date: August 13, 2012]  
[Re-adoption date: May 11, 2015]  
[Re-adoption date: February 8, 2016]  
[Re-adoption date: February 6, 2017]  
[Re-adoption date: February 11, 2019]

LEGAL REFS.: Children's Internet Protection Act; 47 USC 254 (h)(5)(b)(iii);  
(P.L. 106-554, HR 4577, 2000, 114 Stat 2763)

ORC 117.53  
2307.44  
2903.31  
3301.22  
3301.68  
3313.666; 3313.667  
3319.073

CROSS REFS.: AC, Nondiscrimination  
ACA, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex  
ACAA, Sexual Harassment  
EDE, Computer/Online Services (Acceptable Use and Internet Safety)  
IGAE, Health Education  
IIBH, District Web Site Publishing  
JFC, Student Conduct (Zero Tolerance)  
JFCEA, Gangs  
JFCK, Use of Electronic Communications Equipment by Students  
JG, Student Discipline  
JHG, Reporting Child Abuse  
JO, Student Records  
Student Handbooks

## HAZING AND BULLYING (Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)

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

### School Personnel Responsibilities and Complaint Procedures

Hazing, bullying behavior and/or dating violence by any student/school personnel in the District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Hazing bullying and/or dating violence means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts, including but not limited to, 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 or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity; in any District publication; through the use of any District-owned or operated communication tools, including but not limited to District e-mail accounts and/or computers; on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop.

Hazing, bullying and/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 and



- D. using web sites, social networking, 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.

#### Teachers and Other School Staff

Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence as defined above, promptly notify the building principal/designee of the event observed, and promptly file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed.

Teachers and other school staff who receive student or parent reports of suspected hazing, bullying and/or dating violence promptly notify the building principal/designee of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, the complaint is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other professional employee, he/she prepares a written report of the informal complaint that is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day.

#### Complaints

1. Formal Complaints

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence. The reports should be written, including electronic documentation. Such written reports must be reasonably specific including person(s) involved; number of times and places of the alleged conduct; the target of suspected harassment, intimidation and/or bullying and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. This information must be reported to any school staff member or administrator. They are promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

2. Informal Complaints

Students, parents or guardians and school personnel may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator or other school personnel. Such informal complaints must be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of hazing, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior(s) and the names of any potential student or staff witness. The school staff member or administrator who receives the informal complaint promptly documents the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the school staff member and/or administrator is promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

3. Anonymous Complaints

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaint is reviewed and reasonable action is taken to address the situation, to the extent such action (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence.

4. False Complaints

Students are prohibited from deliberately making false complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Students found responsible for deliberately making false reports of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be subject to a full range of disciplinary consequences.

Intervention Strategies

1. Teachers and Other School Staff

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school personnel are encouraged to address the issue of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence in other interactions with students.

School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, hazing, intimidation and bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying.

## 2. Administrator Responsibilities

### A. Investigation

The principal/designee is notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying. Under the direction of the building principal/designee, all such complaints are investigated promptly. A written report of the investigation is prepared when the investigation is complete. The report includes findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence were verified, and when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action, is included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements are attached to the report.

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.

When hazing and/or bullying is based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability, and the behavior creates a hostile environment, the hazing and bullying investigation is suspended while the applicable nondiscrimination grievance procedures are implemented.

### B. Nondisciplinary Interventions

When verified acts of hazing, 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 and/or bullying.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring some cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. The victim's communication and assertiveness skills may be low and could be further eroded by fear resulting from past intimidation and fear of future intimidation. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

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. **Discipline procedures will not infringe on any student's rights under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.**

Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, cannot provide the basis for disciplinary action.

In and out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with Board policy. This consequence is reserved for serious incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating prohibited behaviors.

Allegations of criminal misconduct are reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse is reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines.

Report to the Custodial Parent or Guardian of the Alleged Aggressor

If, after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying by a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the custodial parent or guardian of the aggressor, in writing, of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline is included in such notification.

Strategies are developed and implemented to protect students from new or additional harassment, intimidation or bullying, and from retaliation following reporting of incidents.

Reports to the Alleged Target and His/Her Custodial Parent or Guardian

If, after investigation, acts of bullying or hazing against a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the custodial parent/guardian of the target of the finding. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the aggressor.

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.

School administrators shall notify the custodial parents/guardians of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence and the custodial parents/guardians of students against whom such acts were committed, and shall allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by law.

Police and Child Protective Services

In addition to, or instead of, filing a complaint through this policy, a complainant may choose to exercise other options including, but not limited to, filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private lawsuit. Nothing prohibits a complainant from seeking redress under any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or common law that may apply.

The District must also investigate incidents of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence for the purpose of determining whether there has been a violation of District policy or regulations, even if law enforcement and/or the public children's services are also investigating. All District personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.

(Approval date: June 28, 2010)  
(Re-approval date: August 13, 2012)  
(Re-approval date: May 11, 2015)  
(Re-approval date: February 6, 2017)

## STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONS

The relationship between the District's staff and students must be one of cooperation, understanding and mutual respect. Staff members have a responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning and to motivate each student to perform to his/her capacity.

Staff members should strive to secure individual and group discipline, and should be treated with respect by students at all times. By the same token, staff members should extend to students the same respect and courtesy that they, as staff members, have a right to demand.

Although it is desired that staff members have a sincere interest in students as individuals, partiality and the appearance of impropriety must be avoided. Staff must maintain an appropriate relationship with all students at all times, both in and outside the classroom. Excessive informal and/or social involvement with students is prohibited. Such conduct is not compatible with professional ethics and, as such, will not be tolerated.

Staff members are expected to use good judgment in their relationships with students both inside and outside of the school context including, but not limited to, the following guidelines.

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school, its staff and/or other students.
2. The exchange of purchased gifts between staff members and students is discouraged.
3. Staff-sponsored parties at which students are in attendance, unless they are a part of the school's extracurricular program and are properly supervised, are prohibited.
4. Staff members shall not solicit, encourage, engage, or consummate an inappropriate relationship with a student or minor.
5. Staff members shall not associate with students at any time in any situation or activity that could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
6. **Soliciting, encouraging, engaging or consummating an inappropriate relationship with any student, minor or individual who was a student in the preceding 12 months** ~~Dating between staff members and students~~ is prohibited.
7. Staff members shall not use **disparaging remarks,** insults or sarcasm against students **under any circumstances** ~~as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations.~~
8. Staff members shall maintain **appropriate professional, emotional and social boundaries in a reasonable standard of care for** the supervision, control and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.

9. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
10. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse or neglect.
11. Staff members shall not attempt to diagnose or treat a student's personal problem relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health and/or family relationships but, instead, should refer the student to the appropriate individual or agency for assistance.
12. Staff members shall not **willingly or knowingly violate any student confidentiality required by Federal or State law.** ~~disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health and/or family background.~~
13. **Staff members shall not groom a student or minor for the purpose of establishing an inappropriate emotional, romantic or sexual relationship.**

#### Social Media

1. District staff are prohibited from posting data, documents, photographs or inappropriate information on any social media platform that might result in a disruption of classroom activity or that violates State or Federal law relating to staff and student privacy. The Superintendent/designee has full discretion in determining when a disruption of classroom activity has occurred.
2. District staff are prohibited from providing personal district social media passwords to students.
3. Communications between District staff and students via the internet, personal email accounts, text messaging, apps, personal social media and other modes of personal technology are discouraged. Staff members shall not solicit, encourage, engage, or consummate an inappropriate relationship with a student or minor through the use of technology.
4. Regarding District-approved social media, District staff may communicate with current students only under those circumstances approved by the District. Teachers are limited to communicating with students regarding matters relevant to a student's classwork. Staff with extra-curricular responsibilities are limited to communicating with students about the team they coach or the school activity they advise.

Violation of the prohibitions listed above **will may** result in staff and/or student discipline in accordance with State law, Board policies and regulations, the staff and student codes of conduct and handbooks and/or staff negotiated agreements. **Violations by staff also may be reported to the Ohio Department of Education for further investigation.** Nothing in this policy prohibits District staff and students from the use of education websites and/or use of social media created for curricular, cocurricular or extracurricular purposes.

[Adoption date: February 10, 2020]

LEGAL REF.:                   ORC 3313.20 3319.31; 3319.311  
                                  OAC Chapter 3301-73

CROSS REFS.:               GBCA, Staff Conflict of Interest  
                                  GBCB, Staff Conduct  
                                  GBI, Staff Gifts and Solicitations  
                                  IIBH, District Websites  
                                  JFC, Student Conduct (Zero Tolerance)  
                                  JFCF, Hazing and Bullying  
                                  JG, Student Discipline  
                                  JHF, Student Safety  
                                  JHG, Reporting Child Abuse  
                                  JL, Student Gifts and Solicitations  
                                  JO, Student Records  
                                  KBA, Public's Right to Know  
                                  Staff Handbooks  
                                  Student Handbooks  
                                  Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators

CONTRACT REFS.:           Teachers' Negotiated Agreement  
                                  Support Staff Negotiated Agreement