

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING AND HAZING INVESTIGATING REPORTED INCIDENTS

No student in this district will be subject to hazing, harassment or any other form of persecution by any student or employee at school or on school-sponsored activities. The district specifically prohibits threatening behavior, harassment, intimidation and bullying by students at school and/or by electronic communication, whether or not such communication originated at school or with school equipment, if the communication is specifically directed at students or school personnel and concerns harassment, intimidation or bullying at school.

This policy will be included in the student handbook that is distributed to each student each year.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

“Harassment, intimidation and bullying” means any gesture, written or verbal expression, electronic communication, or physical act that a reasonable person should know will harm another student, damage another student’s property, place another student in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s person or damage to the student’s property, or insult or demean any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school’s educational mission or the education of any student. This type of conduct includes, but is not limited to, gestures, written or verbal, or physical acts or electronic communications.

“At school” means on school grounds, in school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, at school-sponsored activities or at school-sponsored events.

“Electronic communication” means the communication of any written, verbal or pictorial information by means of an electronic device, including but not limited to a telephone, cellular telephone or other wireless telecommunication device, or a computer

“Threatening behavior” means any pattern of behavior or isolated action, whether or not it is directed at another person, that a reasonable person would believe indicates potential for future harm to students, school personnel, or school property.

Investigating Reported Incidents of Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying or Threatening Behavior

1. The following conduct, as defined and specified above, by any person or persons and directed toward any person or persons or the property thereof is specifically prohibited by the district:

- a. Harassment
- b. Intimidation
- c. Bullying

The above prohibitions apply to such conduct at school and/or by electronic communication and whether or not such communication originated at school or with school equipment, if the communication is specifically directed at students or school personnel and concerns harassment, bullying or intimidation at school.

2. Any student who believes he/she has been subjected to acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying as specified above shall immediately report such incident to one of the student's teachers or to the student's school principal. If reported to a teacher, the teacher shall immediately notify the school principal. Students are advised of the importance of reporting these incidents to school officials so that school officials may know about them, investigate them and take any actions deemed appropriate.

3. Upon notification of such an incident by the student or student's teacher, the school principal shall investigate the incident to determine its severity and its potential to result in future violence.

- a. The alleged incident shall be documented in writing by the principal.
- b. The investigation shall be made in a timely fashion.
- c. At the principal's discretion, the investigation may include interviews with students and/or faculty who may have knowledge of the incident; collection of documentary or other evidence relating to such incident; involvement of local/state/federal law enforcement authorities; involvement of other district officials who may be of assistance and/or guidance in the matter; and/or any other legal means by which the investigation may be facilitated.

d. Consideration shall be given to recommendations made by the Safe School Committee regarding the most recent and most effective methods for investigating, evaluating and responding to such matters (See policy 408).

4. When the investigation has been completed, the district shall administer any and all sanctions as deemed appropriate in light of the determination it has made regarding the incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

- a. Sanctions and various options for control and discipline of students which may be considered and/or implemented are set forth in the school's disciplinary policy (See policies 715, 718 and associated regulations).
 - b. In addition, the district may recommend that available community mental health care options be provided to the student, if appropriate.
 - c. Students subject to sanctions under this policy shall have due process and appeal rights as stated in the school's disciplinary policy (See policies 715, 718 and associated regulations).
5. At its discretion, the district may request disclosure of any information concerning students who have received mental health care relating to acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying, or the like, that indicate an explicit threat to the safety of students or school personnel, provided that the disclosure of such information is not made in violation of any federal or state law pertaining to the disclosure of confidential student information. The request for such information shall be made in writing to the party from whom it is requested. Requests for such disclosure from another district as they relate to a student of this district shall be handled accordingly.

Hazing

It is the policy of Ringwood School District that no student or district employee shall participate in or be members of any secret organization on school property or at any school-related event.

For the purposes of this policy, hazing is defined as an activity which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any organization operating subject to the sanctions of the school district.

References 21 O.S. 1190 (Section 826, School Laws of Oklahoma)
Amended by SB 129, 1995 Legislative Session, SB 1941, 2008 Legislative Session

Note: State law requires that a copy of any hazing policy be given to each student enrolled in the school.