

4790 ANTI-HAZING POLICY

4350.1 Hazing is strictly prohibited. There are many misconceptions about hazing. One misconception is that hazing activities are a tradition, that they are harmless pranks. Hazing activities can, in reality, be mentally and physically harmful to students of middle and high school age. Hazing is a premeditated activity that attempts to assert power over others and can result in abuse.

Another false perception is that hazing is not really a problem if someone agrees to participate in the activity. A consent to participate cannot be used as a defense for engaging in hazing activities. Team members may be more susceptible to hazing when there is peer pressure or the demand to fit in. Thus, they may be more likely to consent to something they do not wish to do.

A third misconception is that hazing builds respect and creates team unity. It can actually do the opposite. Respect must be earned through positive communication and team building activities. Hazing builds a culture of mistrust and alienation rather than a culture of community, understanding, and respect.

4350.2 Definitions

Hazing is any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of an individual or group of individuals, or damages property, for the purpose of initiation or membership, regardless of the person's willingness to participate in the activity.

Examples of prohibited hazing include, but are not limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual. Other examples include any activity which could 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.

Physical hazing includes any hazing that is (or could potentially be) physically harmful or humiliating.

Psychological hazing includes any hazing that does or could compromise a person's dignity, embarrass someone, cause an individual to be the object of malicious amusement, or cause an individual psychological or emotional strain.

4350.3 Consequences

Violation of this anti-hazing policy will subject the individual to disciplinary action that may include expulsion and possible criminal and/or civil proceedings.