

**SAFE SCHOOL ZONE**  
**BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND HAZING POLICY**

Position Statement

In order to provide a learning environment that is safe conducive to the educational process, and free from unnecessary disruption, the North Adams-Jerome High School District will not tolerate bullying, harassment, or hazing of students or staff by any of its students, employees, school board members, vendors, contractors, or others doing business or associated with the school district. Bullying, harassment, or hazing of any kind is inappropriate and subject to this regulation. Of particular concern is bullying, harassment, or hazing based on a person's sex, age, color, disability, height, weight, national origin, race religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or other personal characteristics. All students are protected under this policy, and all bullying behavior is equally prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivation. Violations of this regulation will be addressed through the process stipulated in this regulation.

Definitions

a. Bullying:

Bullying is defined as behavior designed to torment another individual through teasing, intimidation, verbal or physical threats, or any electronic communication, including conduct that subjects a person to insults, taunts, or challenges, which are intended to intimidate or provoke an adverse response from the person being treated in this manner. Bullying can also be any written, verbal, or physical act or gesture, or electronic **communication**, that is intended to inflict injury, violence, or a reasonable fear of injury or violence upon one or more persons in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school activities or school-sanctioned events.

b. Harassment:

Harassment is defined as any unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct which is persistent, severe, or pervasive, and which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. Harassment of a sexual nature will be addressed through the district sexual harassment regulations.

c. Hazing:

Hazing is defined as any willful act committed individually or in concert with others for the purpose of subjecting a person to humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse, threats of abuse, ostracism, shame, or disgrace, as a rite of passage to join a group. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen this prohibition.

Penalties

All students of the district are required to comply with this regulation. Appropriate disciplinary action, designed to immediately stop bullying, harassment, or hazing, and to prevent its recurrence, will be taken against students who violate this regulation.

a. Discipline imposed upon a student for violation of this regulation may include suspension or expulsion, depending upon the nature and severity of the offense. A violation of this regulation may also be regarded and punished as a violation of other rules of student conduct including, but not limited to, assault, battery, threats, fighting, intimidation, or other misconduct. (See safe school zone.)

b. When appropriate, referral for criminal investigation and prosecution may be made.

c. A school district employee may be subject to discipline for failure to timely notify an appropriate school official of a possible violation of this regulation, which has been observed by or reported to the employee.

d. It shall be considered a violation of this regulation for any student to coerce, intimidate, discriminate, or retaliate against any person filing a complaint and/or assisting in the investigation of a complaint.

e. A student who knowingly files a false complaint, or who knowingly provides or knows false information has been provided during an investigation or review and fails to report such information to the district shall be subject to discipline.

#### Complaints

Student complaints of bullying, harassment, or hazing should be reported at the building level. All complaints shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the district and will be treated as confidentially as possible.

#### Dissemination

This regulation shall be made available to anyone on request. In addition, this regulation shall be disseminated to all employees, contractors, board members, and students in an appropriate format, such as through this handbook.

#### Procedure

The procedure to be followed regarding a bullying, harassment, or hazing complaint is as follows:

a. Any student who believes that he or she has been subject to bullying, harassment, or hazing will report the incident(s) to a classroom teacher, counselor, or building administrator.

b. The grievance officer or building administrator will investigate the allegations through the following process:

1. Confer with the charging party to obtain a clear understanding of the complaint.
2. Confer with the charged party to obtain a response to the complaint.
3. Meet with witnesses as necessary to gather additional information.
4. Furnish a written summary of the investigation results and assessment to the Superintendent, the parties, and appropriate representatives.

c. After reviewing the report of the grievance officer, the Superintendent may attempt to gather additional information deemed necessary, and, thereafter, shall hold a briefing with the grievance officer and other appropriate administrators to determine what action, if any, needs to be taken.

- Bullying – Must meet minimum consequences per building bullying rubric
- Harassment – A minimum of a 2-day suspension.
- Hazing – A minimum of a 2 day suspension.
- Battery – Minimum out-of-school suspension 1-10 days, possible expulsion, and possible referral to police authorities for legal action.
- Use or possession of explosives, fireworks, foul substances – will result in a 10-day suspension and recommendation for expulsion; assessment by a non-school counselor.
- False fire alarm will result in a 10 to 30 day suspension, assessment by a non-school counselor, possible recommendation for expulsion.

d. For acts of bullying, the grievance officer or building administrator will notify the parent or legal guardian of the victim of bullying, as well as the parent or legal guardian of the perpetrator of the bullying.

e. All prohibited behavior will be documented and available to the school board for review on an annual basis.