

GANG ACTIVITY OR ASSOCIATION

~~Gangs as defined in Virginia Code §18.2-46.1 or other similar groups which initiate, advocate, or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property on school grounds or which disrupt the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute which indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group presents a clear and present danger. This is contrary to the school environment and educational objectives and creates an atmosphere in which unlawful acts or violations of school regulations may occur.~~

~~Incidents involving initiations, hazings, intimidations, and/or related activities of such group affiliations which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to students are prohibited.~~

The Albemarle County School Board recognizes the existence of gangs in the community and the threat they pose to the educational environment. Therefore, students shall not engage in gang activity on school grounds, on school buses or on any school sponsored activity. In addition, students shall not engage in gang activity using the School Division computer system at any time. A gang is defined as any group of three or more persons whose purpose includes:

- Commission of illegal acts
- Participation in activities that threaten the safety of persons or property
- Disruption of the school environment
- Creation of an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

Students are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with School Board policy for participating in gang activity. Gang activity is defined as:

- Wearing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other thing that is evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang;
- Committing any act or omission, or using any speech, either verbal or non-verbal (such as gestures or hand-shakes) showing membership or affiliation in a gang;
- Using any speech or committing any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang, including: (a) soliciting, hazing, and initiating others for membership in any gang, (b) requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person, (c) committing any other illegal act or other violation of school policy and inciting other students to act with physical violence;
- Inappropriate congregating, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, degradation, disgrace and/or related activities which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or mental harm to students, employees or visitors.

The Superintendent shall, in cooperation with local law enforcement and/or juvenile agencies, develop a regulation listing known gang clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, signs, gestures, handshakes, and symbols. The list shall be updated regularly. ~~will establish~~

~~procedures and regulations to ensure that any student wearing, carrying, or displaying gang paraphernalia, exhibiting behavior or gestures which symbolize gang membership, or causing and/or participating in activities which intimidate or affect the attendance of another student shall be subject to disciplinary action.~~

The Superintendent ~~shall~~ will provide in-service training in gang behavior and characteristics to facilitate staff identification of students at-risk of gang involvement and promote membership in authorized school groups and/or activities as an alternative.

Adopted: July 1, 1993

Amended: July 10, 2003; October 22, 2009

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, §§18.2-46.1, 22.1-70, 22.1-78, 22.1-79(2), 22.1-276.01~~18.2-56~~

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The type of dress, apparel, activities, acts, behavior or manner of grooming displayed, reflected, or participated in by the student shall not

- Lead school officials to reasonably believe that such behavior, apparel, activities, acts, or other attributes are gang-related and would disrupt or interfere with the school environment or activity and/or educational objectives;
- Present a physical safety hazard to self, students, staff, and other employees;
- Create an atmosphere in which a student, staff, or other person's well-being is hindered by undue pressure, behavior, intimidation, overt gesture, or threat of violence; or
- Imply gang membership or affiliation by written communication, marks, drawing, painting, design, or emblem upon any school or personal property or on one's person.

If the student's behavior or other attribute violates these provisions, the principal or designee will request the student to make the appropriate correction. If the student refuses, the parent/guardian may be notified and asked to make the necessary correction. The principal will take appropriate corrective and disciplinary action.

Students identified as being gang-involved, gang-influenced, or gang-affiliated will be provided assistance and/or programs which discourage gang involvement or affiliation, enhance self-esteem, encourage interest and participation in school or other positive activities, and promote membership in authorized school organizations.

Training to provide increased awareness of the threat to the safety of students, staff, and school property which gang-related activity poses shall be provided by security on an as-needed basis. Additional presentations will be made available to individual schools, staff, or students at the request of the principal. Presentations will provide training in current identification symbols used by those involved in gang-related activity and will include things such as the identification of hand signals, apparel, jewelry, and/or any other pertinent gang-related information.

Adopted: July 10, 2003
