



Washoe County School District

Every Child, By Name And Face, To Graduation

Volunteers Procedures Manual

www.washoeschools.net
775.348.0346
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Reno, NV 89502

Non-Discrimination Statement: The Washoe County School District is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin or ethnic group identification, marital status, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, religion, age, mental or physical disability, military or veteran's status in educational programs or activities, and employment as required by applicable federal and state laws and regulations. No District employee, including, without limitation, administrators, faculty, or other staff members, nor students shall engage in acts of bullying, harassment, or discrimination on the premises of any public school, school-sponsored event, or school bus in the District. Prohibited behaviors include cyber-bullying, sexual harassment, hazing, intimidation and retaliation.

Disclaimer: This manual may contain references to Board Policy, administrative regulations and other documents pertaining to the rules and regulations of the Washoe County School District. The District reserves the right to revise any of these documents. To verify the current version of any of these documents, please check the District's website at www.washoeschools.net/Page/2903.

Office of Communications and Community Engagement
Department of Volunteer Services
Physical: 5450 Riggins Ct., Suite 4
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775-348-0346
<https://www.washoeschools.net/Domain/91>

Volunteer Services Mission Statement

Providing safe, productive community volunteers, volunteer programs, no-cost worker resources, and other resources for the academic support of all of Washoe County School District in a cooperative, efficient and friendly manner.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A "volunteer" is anyone who, without compensation, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the District. A "volunteer" must be officially registered with and approved by the District prior to performance of the task. Volunteers shall not be considered as "employees" of the Washoe County School District ("District" or "WCSD").

This manual provides overall guidance, structure and direction to faculty, staff and volunteers regarding the volunteer process. The procedures do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. The District reserves the right to change any of these procedures at any time and to expect adherence to the changed procedure.

Unless specifically stated, these procedures apply to all volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken on behalf of the District and to all schools and other sites of operation of the District.

A. Volunteer Services Department

1. The productive use of volunteers requires a planned and organized effort. The Volunteer Services Department, a division of the Office of Communications and Community Engagement, is responsible for the coordination of volunteers in the District.
2. The Department provides a central contact point, offering coordinated and effective management under District guidelines for the benefit of staff, students, and volunteers.
3. Information related to Volunteer Services, including any resources or documents referenced in this manual, may be found at www.washoeschools.net/Domain/91.

B. Volunteer Programs

The District believes in the use of volunteer programs to:

1. Support academic achievement and District goals, to assist teachers in providing basic skills instruction and enrich quality of instruction, to enhance interpersonal experiences for students, and to assist school staff with support services;
2. Increase student motivation for learning;
3. Support student achievement by providing supplementary instruction such as, but not limited to, tutoring/mentoring;
4. Strengthen school/family/community relations through positive participation; and

5. Build an understanding of school programs among interested citizens and business/community organization partnerships.

C. Definitions

1. In accordance with Board Policy 1500:
 - a. "Volunteer" refers to any person, aged 18 or older and who is not a District student, who helps or assists a school or the District, regardless of compensation or benefit, with activities, athletics, functions, programs, and/or tasks, including, but not limited to, in a classroom, on school grounds, at a school/District sanctioned activity, at a school/District-sponsored event, or on a school/District-sponsored trip.
 - i. The term does not include:
 1. a student teacher who is enrolled at an institution of higher education and is taking a course which requires the student to be present in the classroom of the school on a limited basis to observe and to be observed in the classroom; and is under direct supervision of a licensed teacher or his/her professor at all times while in the classroom; or
 2. A parent/guardian who is visiting the classroom or an activity of his/her student but does not interact with other students or assist staff.
 - b. "Unsupervised contact" refers to direct contact or interaction with one or more students who are not under the direct supervision of a District employee or other person designated by the District as the person responsible for students.
 - i. A student is under direct supervision if the District staff member or other designated individual:
 1. If indoors, is present in the same room as the student or has visual contact with the student.
 2. If outdoors, is within 30 yards of the student or has visual contact with the student.
 - ii. An approved volunteer may have unsupervised contact with students if he/she has the potential for only incidental unsupervised contact with students in commonly used areas on the grounds of a public school, with permission of the school administrator.

D. Legal Requirements and Associated Documents

1. Following are policies, regulations and forms associated with volunteering in the District. (This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list. Visit www.wcsdpolicy.net for the District's policy database.)
 - a. Board Policy 1500, Volunteers
 - b. Administrative Regulation 1501, Volunteer Screening and Background Checks
 - c. Administrative Regulation 1502, Volunteer Protocols
 - d. Administrative Regulation 4560, Mandatory Reporting – Child Abuse, Neglect, Corporal Punishment
 - e. Administrative Form 1537, Adult Volunteer Application
 - f. Administrative Form 7576, Annual Request to Transport Students
 - g. Administrative Regulation 4430, Sexual Harassment and Misconduct by Staff
 - h. Board Policy 5700, Safe and Respectful Learning Environment
 - i. Board Policy 9200, Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited

II. CODE OF CONDUCT

1. When volunteering in the District, treat everyone you encounter fairly and with respect, regardless of actual or perceived gender, size, ethnicity, race, sex, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, political beliefs, or economic status.
2. The District expects all volunteers to display high personal standards, which require:
 - a. Refraining from public criticism of fellow volunteers, adult leaders, students or their families, and employees of the District.
 - b. Alcohol and/or Controlled Substances. No volunteer may be impaired or under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance while on District property, at a District-sponsored event, or while representing the District as part of a school/District organization or team. The possession, use, sale, and/or distribution of alcohol, controlled substances, and/or paraphernalia is prohibited. In accordance with federal law, this prohibition includes marijuana in any of its forms. Violations shall be reported to the building site administrator.
 - i. "Impaired" means under the influence of a substance such that the individual's motor senses (i.e. sight, hearing, balance, reaction,

reflex) or judgment either are or may be reasonably presumed to be affected.

- c. No smoking. The smoking, use, and/or sale of tobacco, tobacco products, or paraphernalia by any individual while on District property, on District-provided transportation, or at school- or District-sponsored activities and events is prohibited. This includes carrying lit tobacco products and the use of smokeless tobacco products, to include “herbal” or “fake” chew, or any device which simulates smoking such as an electronic cigarette, cigar or pipe, personal vaporizer, e-hookah, or electronic nicotine delivery system. Violations shall be reported to the building site administrator.
- d. Weapons. The possession and/or use of weapons on school property is prohibited. This includes individuals who have a permit to carry a concealed weapon (CCW) as state law does not allow firearms on school district property.
- e. Surreptitious, secret or unauthorized electronic surveillance is prohibited on any school property without the knowledge of the person being observed.
- f. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, or otherwise offensive language. Just as we expect students to refrain from using inappropriate language while at school, we also expect the same from teachers, staff and volunteers. Children easily pick up on what we say; keep in mind that what is a harmless slang term to you may be offensive to another adult or student.
- g. Refrain from any conduct that causes damage to or the destruction of District or personal property.
- h. Cell phones. Volunteers are asked to refrain from the use of personal devices such as a cell phone when such use may create a disruption to the instructional or working environment.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY

1. What you hear and observe about students, families, and staff while volunteering in a school is **confidential**. For schools to provide the best environment for learning, everyone’s privacy must be respected.
2. Volunteers may be asked to complete a Confidentiality Agreement.
3. Volunteer applicants, by signing the Volunteer Application, acknowledge and agree that he/she:
 - a. May have access to confidential student information;

- b. Will maintain complete confidentiality regarding the information obtained while serving as a volunteer;
- c. Will not divulge to anyone any matters discussed, including discussions by District employees or any student behaviors/interactions, written materials or computerized records which are viewed while serving as a volunteer;
- d. Will comply with all applicable policies and regulations of the District, to include the District's prohibition against harassment and discrimination; and
- e. Will follow established procedures of the District regarding disclosure of information.

A. Grading Papers

1. School volunteers may be asked to help with grading student papers. Access to other student's scholastic information is up to the discretion of the school principal and teacher.
2. It is recommended that any volunteer with access to a student's scholastic information complete a Confidentiality Agreement.
 - a. Confidentiality forms are available at <http://washoeschool.net/page/3688> or check with the school's secretary.

B. Student Educational Records

1. Having access to private information about students is not to be taken lightly. The District is obligated to protect the confidentiality of student educational records and complies with state and federal laws and regulations which protect the privacy interests of parents/guardians and students. These laws include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 - b. Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA)
 - c. Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)
 - d. Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) Chapter 392, Pupils
2. For additional information on PPRA or FERPA for students in General Education programs, please contact:

Washoe County School District
Student Accounting Department

390 Edison Way (location address)
P.O. Box 30425 (mailing address)
Reno, NV 89520-3425
Phone: (775) 861-4428

3. For additional information on IDEA for students who are in Special Education programs, please contact:

WCSD Student Support Services Department
425 East Ninth Street (location address)
P.O. Box 30425 (mailing address)
Reno, NV 89520-3425
Phone: (775) 789-4633

IV. DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Volunteers perform under the direction and supervision of school personnel or other designated staff and should know and follow all District policies, regulations, and school rules.
2. All volunteers are required to sign in at the school office and wear a visitor's badge.

A. Communicate

1. Communicate and remember you are part of a team.
2. Do your best to communicate with the teacher or school staff. Similarly, school staff should contact you if your volunteer time is canceled or changed for any reason.
3. If you must be absent, call the school and let them know. The students will be disappointed you cannot come, but are reassured that you care enough to call.

B. Volunteer Hours/Weather Cancellation

1. Arrive a little early so there is time for communication and direction.
2. Let the teacher, secretary, or whomever is supervising your work as a volunteer know in advance if your schedule changes or if you cannot make it when you are expected. Determine in advance the best way to communicate-email, phone, written, text.
3. Volunteers help in schools during regular school hours, usually the same hours that the school office is open and children are attending school. On special

occasions, volunteers are asked to volunteer on an evening or weekend, but always under the supervision of a staff person.

4. In case of bad weather, check the news, the District's website at www.washoeschools.net, District social media, or call the parent line at 775-334-8373 to get the latest information, to find out if there is a delayed start or if school is canceled.
5. Check the school's calendar, so you know when the school is in session.

C. Responsibilities of Volunteers

1. Understand and accept students in terms of their own background and values.
2. Support and supplement the instructional program of the classroom teacher.
3. Attend recommended or required orientation and training sessions.
4. Be prompt, dependable, and regular in attendance.
5. Know and observe all District and school rules and procedures (i.e. fire drills, accident reporting, lunch and coffee privileges, student restroom and drink privileges, inclement weather procedures).
6. Discuss problems that arise with the teacher, Administrator, staff, or Volunteer Services Coordinator.
7. Immediately notify the principal, teacher, counselor, or school nurse if a student confides in them about an abusive situation. See Section XII for information related to mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect.
8. Respect confidentiality at it relates to the school, students, and staff. Ensure that a child's work and behavior in school are held in confidence.
9. Remember that you are acting as a role model for children, not only in how you interact with others at school, but who you are as a person.

D. Tips for Volunteers

1. Be patient when working with students.
2. Names are important. Make sure you say the student's name the way the student wants it to be said. Learn to spell it correctly. Make sure the student knows your name and can pronounce it correctly.
3. Show that you are interested in the student as a person by listening carefully to what they say and showing you care by words and action.

4. Encourage and support student successes. Build self-confidence by praising them honestly and frequently. Remember attentiveness and effort can be as important as performance. Accentuate the positive and minimize the negative.
5. Avoid making comparisons between students, between teachers and between schools.
6. Always remember to be fair and consistent.
7. Students make mistakes. Let them know that making mistakes is part of learning. Do not be afraid of making mistakes yourself.
8. Be trustworthy and honest in your approach and attitude.

V. SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

1. Volunteers function in a position of trust and the District does not extend that volunteer/student trust relationship outside of the supervised school environment. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to notify the site administrator immediately if he/she becomes involved with a student/ family outside the District/school environment.
2. As the relationship with a student progresses, he/she may begin to trust and confide in you. Take time to listen to students. However, do not make a promise you cannot keep. If a student reveals information relating to a possible abusive situation or other safety concern, let the student know that you care and are there to listen but that you are legally required to pass this information on to a teacher, counselor, or principal who can offer them help. There is also a chance that someone may already have insight into the situation, which could help you to understand and work better with that student.
3. Personal information about yourself should be shared only as it is relevant to the work you are doing with the student. Avoid giving personal contact information such as your address, phone and email.
4. Use common sense: Never isolate yourself with a student.
 - a. Volunteers should be in public areas (e.g. hallways, classroom, library, cafeteria, etc., anywhere a staff member could stop by anytime and check on a volunteer at any time, no locked doors, bathrooms or secluded areas).
 - b. Volunteer locations within a school will vary, depending upon availability and the preference of the student's teacher. Many schools are crowded, so you may end up working with the student in the hallway. Try to find a quiet space with as few distractions as possible.

- c. A teacher may direct you to an empty classroom. Be sure to leave the door open at all times, and to sit in two desks which are easily seen by those passing by. Always work in a public area, on site.
 - d. A teacher may ask you to escort a student to the restroom. Never enter the restroom with a student but wait for the student in the hallway.
5. If you are working with a student in an after school program, it may be tempting to offer the student a ride home. **Never go off site with a student, and never give them a ride in your car.** Your volunteer experience is limited to the public school setting.
- a. Volunteer experiences that require driving a student require additional background screening and approval of the District's Transportation Department. (See "Annual Request to Transport Students Application" – Addendum D)

A. Discipline or Behavior Problems

- 1. As a school volunteer you may notice students disobeying school or classroom rules. Your responsibility is to call such matters to the attention of the teacher or other supervising school personnel. To the best of your ability, do not take corrective measures into your own hands.
 - a. Corporal punishment, the intentional infliction of physical pain upon or the physical restraint of a student for disciplinary purposes, by a District employee or volunteer is prohibited.
- 2. Each school has a personality or culture of its own. Learn about the school's general disciplinary procedures to avoid any misunderstanding. Please check with your school contact.

B. Student/Volunteer Relationships

- 1. Can I hug my student?
 - a. Some students, especially at the elementary level, will naturally become attached and show affection. Students may crave affection and attention, so it is important that you handle the situation with sensitivity.
 - b. **A front hug is inappropriate and should be avoided.** Turn it into a side hug by carefully putting your arm around a child's shoulder.
 - c. Use other signs of affection, such as "high fives."
 - d. Regardless of age, students should never sit on your lap.

2. What are some safer touch areas? Areas that are safest to touch are a student's shoulders, upper back, arms, and hands.
3. Remember to keep in mind the cultural perspective and personal context of touch from the student's perspective. Cultural influences, beliefs and personal history affects a student's comfort level regarding personal boundaries. Some children are not inviting of touch and may want more personal space; respect their wishes.
4. Special circumstances may arise where touch that exceeds these guidelines will be necessary. Special education, nursing and coaching may require additional student contact for the health and hygiene needs of the student. Be clear (to yourself and the student) about when, where, why and how you are touching the student.

VI. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Scope of Volunteer Involvement

1. Volunteers may be utilized in many programs and activities of the District and serve at appropriate levels of skill as determined by the Volunteer Services Department. Volunteers may not, however, be utilized to displace any paid employees from their positions.
2. This manual will be made available to every individual outlining the general procedures for volunteering.

B. Liability Coverage

1. The District provides liability coverage and an accident policy for its volunteers that provides up to \$1,500 after any other valid and collectable insurance. In order to have this coverage, **all volunteers must be approved, have the appropriate background check/fingerprinting completed, and sign in on the school's volunteer / visitor sign in sheet** (in every school office) every time they volunteer.
 - a. If you are in an accident while volunteering for the District, ask staff for an incident form, fill it out, and turn into your school or department contact.
2. Volunteers are not covered by Workers' Compensation.

C. Diversity

1. The District embraces differences to create an equitable, academically enriching, safe and welcoming school environment for all students, their families, faculty and the community, regardless of gender, size, ethnicity, race, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic status.
2. Some suggested activities for becoming a culturally responsive volunteer include:
 - a. Engage in reflective thinking and writing. Volunteers must reflect on their actions and interactions as they try to discern the personal motivations that govern their behaviors. Understanding the factors that contribute to certain behaviors (e.g., racism, ethnocentrism) is the first step toward changing these behaviors. This process is facilitated by autobiographical and reflective writing, usually in a journal.
 - b. Explore personal and family histories. Volunteers could explore their early experiences and familial events that have contributed to their understanding of themselves and others.
 - c. Acknowledge membership of different groups and evaluate how belonging to that group influences how one relates to and views others.
 - d. Learn about the history and experiences of diverse groups.
 - e. Visit or read about successful volunteers in diverse settings.
 - f. Develop an appreciation, acceptance and respect for diversity.

D. Transportation of Students

1. Volunteers are not allowed to provide transportation for students unless they have prior approval and have completed the required forms.
2. Contact school staff for assistance or check with the District's Transportation Department at 775-337-7735.

E. Volunteers in Kindergarten Classes

1. Please note, kindergarten classes operate on schedules which may differ from other grade levels and often seem to be "autonomous" entities with their school.
2. Check with your school contact for kindergarten schedules.

F. Volunteers in the Upper Grades

1. Sometimes volunteers do not feel needed or welcome by students or teachers in upper grade levels. Be assured, however, that your presence and assistance is still welcome and needed. Volunteering with older students is just as important

as in the early grades; it simply has to be adapted to the developmental and educational needs of the students.

2. If you would like to volunteer with older students and are unsure how, speak to the principal, school contact, a teacher or Volunteer Services for specific ideas.

G. Volunteering with Young Children

1. Volunteers should not bring their young children to school while performing their volunteer duties.
2. Children of volunteers are not allowed on school field trips. Only students in the class can attend.

H. Parents/Guardians as Visitors

1. A parent/guardian who wishes to visit his/her child's classroom, may do so in accordance with Board Policy 1505, Visitors to District Property. In this case, there may be no interaction with other students in the classroom.
2. A parent/guardian who wishes to observe a field trip or activity but not serve as a volunteer/chaperone, may not ride the school bus or interact with students at the location of the field trip or activity.

I. Episodic or One-Time Volunteer Opportunities

1. Check the District's one-time or episodic volunteering opportunities at <http://www.washoeschools.net/Domain/91>.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

A. Upon Arriving

1. When you first meet with your teacher/supervisor, plan to discuss the following:
 - a. Days and times to work in classroom/school;
 - b. Procedures to keep in touch with teacher/supervisor (regular conferences, telephone conversations, notes, informal meetings);
 - c. Alternate plans for days when the teacher/supervisor is absent;
 - d. How the teacher/supervisor will communicate the day's assignment (folder, note or other means);

- e. How the students will address the volunteer (school or volunteer's preference of having students use first name or Mr. /Ms. /Mrs.);
 - f. Materials, strategies or games to be used;
 - g. Teacher/supervisor's classroom/school procedures and rules (such as management system, reinforcement techniques, organizational plans, emergency procedures, where volunteer leaves personal belongings, and whether volunteer is welcome in teachers' lounge and lunchroom); and
 - h. Protocol for informing school/teacher/student about volunteer absence.
2. If you work on academic areas with students, you should also discuss:
- a. Pertinent background information about the student(s) the volunteer will work with (within the appropriate standards of student information confidentiality);
 - b. Special needs of the student(s);
 - c. Tips for working with specific students (learning style and reinforcement techniques);
 - d. Procedures for taking student(s) out of classroom for individual work;
 - e. Designation of work area location; and
 - f. Alternate plan if student is absent.

B. What To Wear

1. Wearing appropriate, practical, and comfortable clothing is another way you can be a role model.
2. If you have a question on what is appropriate, feel free to ask for a copy of the school's dress code or to talk with the principal, a teacher, or another school volunteer.

C. Personal Possessions

1. If you plan to bring personal possessions into a school, please check with your school contact to determine what is appropriate to bring and where to store it safely.

D. Interests and Talents

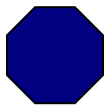
1. The District wants to make the best match possible between volunteer opportunities and your interests and talents. Let school personnel or Volunteer

Services know how you can best contribute. Your input may lead to the development of additional volunteer opportunities.

VIII. SCHOOL SAFETY

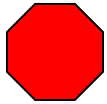
1. For code announcements, please read the Emergency Codes Information below.
2. For additional school safety information/training, contact Volunteer Services at 775-348-0346.

A. Emergency Codes of the District



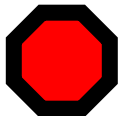
BLUE: Injury or medical emergency on campus or in building.

Code Blue Team members report to announced location. Remaining staff stays off phone/intercom lines and waits for further instructions.

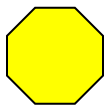


RED: Danger on campus or in building.

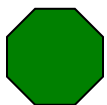
Secure and lock doors/lights out/take shelter. When the building is in a Code Red, ignore fire alarm (for example, an unwelcome individual in the building could use the fire alarm to try to lure people out from hiding). Wait for an "all-clear" announcement from an official or familiar voice. Stay away from all doors and windows. If all is OK in your room, display a green card under door or in window.



Code Red 89—Bomb threat. Evacuate as previously instructed, or ask for the location from your school contact, and meet at the designated location.



YELLOW: Heightened Security. Remain in office or classrooms with doors locked. Maintain instructional schedule. Do not leave until the all-clear is delivered. Examples include natural disasters, suspicious person, violent fight, and nearby danger.



GREEN: Acceptable "All-Clear" from administrator on the intercom. Resume regular activities.

B. Fire Alarm:

1. Evacuate building immediately.
2. Line up at designated locations. Ask for the location from your school contact.
3. Wait for the all clear bell or further instructions.

C. Earthquake:

1. Duck, Cover, Hold.
2. Wait for tremor to stop.
3. Evacuate the building, if instructed, to designated fire alarm evacuation location.
4. Stay away from walls, windows, and power lines.

D. For Emergencies

1. Medical information should be provided to your school contact in case of an emergency. Make sure your school/department contact knows an emergency contact person and is aware of any medical issues or important medications.
2. Emergency contact information may also be provided on the volunteer application.

IX. VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION, TRAINING & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

1. Although this handbook has been designed to cover general information and procedures, your school or volunteer assignment may have additional volunteer information. We recommend volunteers ask for school calendars as they can be very helpful to keep track of what is happening and days a school might be closed.

A. Volunteer Training and Learning Opportunities

1. Some volunteering requires specific trainings. Training can be provided through Volunteer Services at 775-348-0346 or at a school or department site. When volunteering, it is always best to ask for training on where supplies are located, how to use certain office equipment, as well as specific school practices. Each school/department is different and being flexible and asking questions is part of learning how to help, each school may be a little different, so ask your assigned school contact.

2. School volunteers are strongly encouraged to participate in any school-wide training/workshops or activities which allow volunteer participation.
3. If you encounter problems, issues or have concerns while volunteering, ask your school contact for assistance or contact Volunteer Services at 775-348-0346.

X. BULLYING, HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED

1. The District is dedicated to providing a safe and respectful learning and working environment free from bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination; as well as identifying and correcting practices and policies that perpetuate negative beliefs and behaviors. This commitment includes the actions and behaviors of students, faculty and staff, coaches and volunteers, parents/guardians and families, and other visitors to District schools, school buses and other facilities.
2. The District seeks to ensure all members of the community have access to resolve concerns and complaints. Check with your school administrator about reporting mechanisms within your school. Additionally, any individual may report bullying using the District's online reporting method at <http://bullyfreezone.nv.gov/>
3. The complaint process as well as definitions for bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, hazing, and retaliation may be found in Board Policy 9200, Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited, and Board Policy 5700, Safe and Respectful Learning, and associated administrative regulations.