

**VANDALISM/VIOLENCE**

The Long Hill Township Board of Education (BOE) views vandalism against school property by pupils and/or others as reprehensible. The causes of such misbehavior often are complex, calling for careful study by parents/guardians, school staff and appropriate community officials in accordance with the **Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials (MOA)**.

The BOE believes that pupils should respect property and take pride in the schools of this district. Whenever a student has been found to have done willful and malicious damage to property of the BOE, the principal of the school shall notify the Chief School Administrator (CSA). The BOE will hold the pupil or his/her parents/guardians liable for the damage caused by him/her. Individuals other than students, will be referred to the local authorities. Students will be governed by this policy.

When vandalism is discovered, the administration is directed to take such steps as are necessary to identify the vandals. If students have taken part in the vandalism, the appropriate administrator shall:

- A. Identify the students involved;
- B. Call together persons, including the parents/guardians, needed to study the causes;
- C. Decide upon disciplinary and/or legal action possibly including suspension. Should parents/guardians fail to cooperate in the discussions, the administration may charge the student with being delinquent by a petition stating the offense and requesting appearance in juvenile court;
- D. Take any constructive actions needed to try to guard against further such student misbehavior;
- E. Seek appropriate restitution.

Violence

Physical violence including assault with or without a weapon, against another student, a staff member or board member is prohibited and will result in the disciplinary sanctions included in policies on suspension and expulsion and harassment, bullying, intimidation and threatening behavior. Disruptive behavior that is characterized by violence, even though not directed toward another person, should be reported by the classroom teacher to the school principal, unless instructed otherwise, so that possible program adjustments may be identified.

Any student who is convicted or adjudicated delinquent for possession of a firearm or a crime while armed with a firearm or found knowingly in possession of a firearm on any school property or on a school bus or at a school-sponsored function shall be immediately removed from the school's regular education program for a period of not less than one calendar year. The Chief School Administrator (CSA) may modify this suspension on a case-by-case basis. Each student so removed shall be placed in an alternative educational program or on home instruction and shall be entitled to a hearing before the board.

Any student found or observed on school property or at a school event in possession of a weapon or dangerous instrument other than a firearm shall be reported to the principal/designee and appropriate law enforcement official with all known information concerning the matter, including the identity of the student involved. The CSA shall determine at the end of the year whether the student is prepared to return to the regular education program in accordance with the procedures established by the Commissioner of Education.

Any school employee observing or having direct knowledge from a participant or victim of an act of violence in the district public school(s) should complete the standard report form and submit it to the school principal who is responsible for preparing the official report to the chief school administrator. Staff will report accurately and not falsify information.

The CSA shall annually:

- A. Report to the BOE at a public meeting in October, all acts of violence and vandalism in the district that occurred during the previous school year.
- B. Ensure that a transcript of the annual report of violence and vandalism is kept on file at the board office and made available to the public.

## **Vandalism/Violence**

**5131.5**

- C. Forward the transcript of the public hearing on violence and vandalism to the Department of Education by November 1;
- D. Notify the county superintendent of action taken regarding incidents of violence.

### Threats of Violence

The BOE is committed to promoting healthy relationships and a safe learning environment. Therefore, it shall not tolerate student threats of harm to self or others or other threatening behaviors, including threats to damage school property. Threatening behaviors shall not be tolerated on school property or at activities under the jurisdiction of the BOE.

Students shall inform a teacher, guidance counselor or principal when he/she is in possession of knowledge of such threats. Staff shall immediately notify the principal of any threat or threatening behavior that he/she has knowledge of, has witnessed or received. All such threats shall be promptly reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Students who perpetrate threatening behaviors shall be disciplined in accordance with policy and regulations on suspension and expulsion, conduct/discipline and harassment and bullying.

### Unsafe School Choice Option

The CSA shall comply with all requirements of the Unsafe School Choice Option policy adopted by the state board of education for schools in districts that receive funds under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. He/she shall keep the BOE informed of all state requirements and actions taken to implement the policy.

Particularly, if a school in the district is designated as “persistently dangerous” as defined in the policy, corrective action plans shall be prepared and presented to the BOE for review. The corrective action plans shall be in the format provided by the department of education and shall describe how the schools will reduce the number of incidents of violence as determined by the Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System (EVVRS).

## **Vandalism/Violence**

**5131.5**

Likewise, if a student while at school or on school grounds becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense as defined by state statute, he/she shall be offered the option of transferring to another safe school.

Parents/guardians shall be informed according to law and policy.

The BOE shall be provided with access to a copy of the current statewide Unsafe School Choice Option Policy.

### School Violence Awareness Week

This school district shall observe School Violence Awareness Week, the week beginning on the third Monday in October of each year. Organized activities focused on the prevention of school violence will be offered to students, employees and board members. Local law enforcement personnel will be invited to participate.

### Violence and Vandalism Reporting

The CSA will annually submit a report utilizing the Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting system (EVVRS) accurately reporting on each incident of violence, vandalism and alcohol and other drug abuse within the school district. Any allegations of falsification of data will be reviewed by the BOE using the requirements and procedures set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.3(g). Board action shall be based on a consideration of the nature of the conduct, the circumstances under which it occurred, and the employee's prior employment record.

### Implementation

The CSA shall oversee the development and implementation of regulations on all aspects of this policy, including the establishment of procedures for cooperation between school staff and law enforcement officials for all situations involving firearms or other deadly weapons.

**First reading: March 30, 2009**

**Second reading: April 27, 2009**

**Legal References:**

N.J.S.A. 2A:4A-60 et al	Disclosure of juvenile information; penalties for disclosure
N.J.S.A. 2A:53A-15	Liability of parent or guardian for willful destruction of property by infant under 18
N.J.S.A. 2C:39-5	Unlawful possession of weapons
N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46	Act of violence; report by school employee; notice of action taken; annual report
N.J.S.A. 18A:25-2	Authority over pupils
N.J.S.A. 18A:36-5.1	School Violence Awareness Week
N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq.	Discipline of Pupils

See particularly:

N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2,-2.1  
through -2.5, -3, -7  
through -12

N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.8	Discipline/suspension/expulsion
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.1 et seq.	Programs to Support Student Development

See particularly:

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.4, -5.1,  
-5.2, -5.3, -5.5, -5.6, -5.7, -6.1  
“H.A v. Warren Hills Regional School District, 1976 S.L.D. 336

See also:

Commissioners’ Decisions indexed under “Pupils-Punishment of” in Index to N.J. School Law Decisions  
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L 107-110, 20 U.S.C.A. 6301 et seq.  
A Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials (2007 Revisions)  
Unsafe School Choice Option Policy, New Jersey Department of Education, June 30, 2003

**Vandalism/Violence**

**5131.5**

**Possible Cross References:**

- \*1120           Communicating with the Public through Board of Education meetings
- 1330           Use of School Facilities and Grounds
- \*3250           Income from Fees, Fines, Charges
- 3541.33        Procedures for Emergencies; Safety
- 4147           Employee Safety
- \*5114           Suspension and Expulsion
- \*5119           Transfers and Withdrawals
- \*5124           Reporting to Parents/Guardians
- \*5131           Conduct/Discipline and Threatening Behavior Prevention
- 5131.4         Campus Disturbances
- \*5131.6        Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco (substance abuse)
- \*5131.7        Weapons and Dangerous Instruments
- 5142.1         Safety Patrols
- \*6114           Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness
- \*6172           Alternative Educational Programs

\*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.

