



HOPEhouse at Cotting School Anti-Hazing Policy

The term “hazing” as defined in Massachusetts General Law 269: 17, 18, 19, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

HOPEhouse at Cotting School does not have any student-run groups, teams, or organizations. All groups are organized and supervised by adults at all times and students are never left unattended. However, Cotting School strictly prohibits any acts of hazing associated with student groups, teams, or organizations by students, staff, or any members of the Cotting community.

The COO or her designee will investigate any reports of hazing within 24 hours. If it is determined that a student participated in an act of hazing the following disciplinary actions may be taken:

1. Immediate notification of families of students involved in a hazing incident.
2. Emergency convening of the IEP teams (separately) of the relevant students to determine what adjustments or accommodations need to be made, if any, to their IEPs to support the students. The impact of the student’s disability on the incident will be carefully considered.
3. Individual support/counseling will be provided for both perpetrators and victims of hazing utilizing Cotting’s School Psychologist and Guidance Counselors where appropriate. For perpetrators, emphasis will be placed on increasing appropriate behavior and increasing awareness of the impact of behaviors on others. For victims, emphasis will be placed on restoring a sense of safety and security as well as positively reinforce the right for all students to self-advocate and report unsafe behaviors.
4. A student who has been the organizer of a hazing incident may be removed from extra-curricular activities, such as sports, after school classes, the Senior Class Trip, etc, as appropriate.
5. Extra supervision will be provided to ensure there are no recurrences of hazing. If a student who has perpetrated a hazing incident needs 1:1 supervision, additional staffing supports will be discussed with the sending school district as appropriate and via a Team meeting.

6. In some situations it may be appropriate to suspend a student from school because of an act of hazing. All Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations will be followed with regard to suspension (see DESE criteria 9.5 and 9.6)
7. Law enforcement will be notified immediately if in the course of our investigation we discover a crime has been committed.

All students will be provided with a copy of the schools anti-hazing policy via the Student Handbook. In addition, a staff member will explain the policy to them. The policy will be included and updated annually in the Student Handbook.

Cotting School will file, at least annually, a report with the Department certifying:

- Its compliance with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams, or organizations, and every full-time enrolled student, of the provision of M.G.L. c. 269§§ 17 through 19
- Its adoption of a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing
- That the hazing policy has been included in the student handbook or other means of communicating school program policies