
STUDENTS – CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Cross Ref:

The Board of School Trustees of Westfield Washington Schools prohibits Organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior on school property, on school buses, and/or at school-sponsored functions and prohibits reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report Organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders, or other people with reliable information about an act of Organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior.

The following definitions apply to this policy:

“Criminal Organization” means a group with at least three (3) members that specifically:

- (1) Promotes, sponsors, or assists in; or participates in;
- (2) Requires as a condition of membership or continued membership; or
- (3) Has as one of its goals;

The commission of a felony or an act that would be a felony if committed by an adult or the offense of battery.

“Criminal Organization Activity” means knowing or intentional participation in a criminal organization, or knowing or intentional solicitation, recruitment, enticement, or intimidation of another individual to join a criminal organization.

Per state law, a school employee shall report any incidence of suspected criminal organization activity, criminal organization intimidation, or criminal organization recruitment to the principal and the school safety specialist. The principal and the school safety specialist may take appropriate action to maintain a safe and secure school environment, including providing appropriate intervention services. Appropriate consequences and remedial actions are those that take into consideration the severity of the offenses and consider both the developmental ages of the student offenders and the students’ histories of inappropriate behaviors per the code of conduct.

The principal or designee shall conduct a thorough and complete investigation for each report of suspected organization activity. The investigation shall be initiated by the principal or the principal’s designee within one school day of the report of the incident. The principal may appoint additional personnel and request the assistance of law enforcement to assist in the investigation. The investigation shall be completed and the written findings submitted to the principal as soon as possible, but not later than five school days from the date of the report of the alleged incident of criminal organization activity.

The principal shall take any appropriate disciplinary actions based upon the findings of the investigation, in accordance with the code of conduct. Consequences for a student who engages in criminal organization activity may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

As appropriate, the principal shall provide the parents of the students who were investigated with information about the investigation. The information to be provided to parents includes the nature of the investigation, whether the corporation found evidence of criminal organization activity, and whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the activity. This information is to be provided in an expedited manner.

As appropriate to the investigation findings, the principal may provide intervention and/or relevant support services. The principal shall inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents and discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services.

Support services may include one or more of the following:

1. Criminal organization awareness education that shows promise of effectiveness based on research. The criminal organization awareness education information should be revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in criminal organization and criminal organization-like activity.
2. Culturally and/or linguistically appropriate services/supports for parents and families.
3. Counseling coupled with mentoring for students and their families.
4. Community and faith-based organizations and civic groups.
5. Viable, sustainable after-school programs developed in collaboration with other stakeholders.
6. Job training and employment opportunities as both a deterrent to criminal organization involvement and an incentive to leave criminal organization involvement.
7. School sanctioned/facilitated extra-curricular activities.

The principal shall submit the report to the Superintendent or his or her designee within ten (10) school days of the completion of the investigation.

Each school within the school corporation shall record the number of investigations disposed of internally and the number of cases referred to local law enforcement, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, and gender. Each school shall report this information to the Superintendent who shall submit a written report to the Indiana Department of Education by June 1 of each year.

This policy shall be annually disseminated to all parents who have children enrolled in a school within the school corporation. Notice of this policy must be published in student handbooks and all other publications of the school corporation that set forth the rules and procedures for schools within the school corporation.

School officials are encouraged to collaborate with stakeholders to provide criminal organization prevention and intervention services and programs, including but not limited to:

1. Provide training for staff and teachers on organization prevention and intervention resources within a jurisdiction on a periodic basis. The organization awareness information should be revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in organization activity.
2. Create formalized collaboration plans between local school administration and community based prevention and intervention providers (possibly using the existing County Safe School Commissions as points of contact). The formalized collaborations should make effective, coordinated, and maximized use of federal funding a priority.
3. Coordinate resources and funding opportunities to support organization prevention and intervention activities.
4. Consider integrating the Organization Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program into curricula.