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**AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**APS Code: JICF**

**Adopted August 1993**

**Revised June 2007**

**Revised December 2015**

**Reviewed February 2016**

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### **SECRET SOCIETIES/GANG ACTIVITY**

The Board of Education desires to keep district schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any groups or gangs which advocate drug use, violence or other unlawful or disruptive behavior. Therefore, gang “wannabes”, affiliation, membership, and gang-related activity will not be tolerated in the schools, on school grounds, in district vehicles or at school-related activities or events. The principal or designee(s) shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter gang intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement authorities so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort.

The Board realizes that many students become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of gang “wannabes”, affiliation and membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of gang “wannabes”, affiliation and membership. Therefore, gang violence prevention education will be available in all schools.

**LEGAL REFS.:** C.R.S. 22-1-120 (8)  
C.R.S. 22-32-109.1 (2)(a)(I)(F) (policy required as part of safe schools plan)

**CROSS REFS.:** JICI, Weapons in School  
JIH, Student Interrogations, Searches and Arrests  
JK, Student Discipline  
JKD/JKE, Suspension/Expulsion of Students

## **SECRET SOCIETIES/GANG ACTIVITY**

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Gang membership and gang related activity will not be tolerated in the schools, on the school grounds, in district vehicles or at school-related activities or events.

Most gang wannabes and gang members advertise their affiliation and membership by distinctive dress and behaviors. Whether a given situation presents a case of gang involvement depends upon the specific facts and circumstances. However, the following are examples of attire, symbols and behavior which may present gang involvement.

#### **A. Gang Attire/Symbols**

The following non-exclusive list denotes some possible examples of gang attire, which by virtue of its predominant color, arrangement, trademark or any other attribute may be deemed gang-related:

- jewelry;
- some sports attire;
- handkerchiefs or scarves from belt loops, pockets or tied to the leg;
- brim of hat turned to right or left;
- colored shoe laces;
- colors displayed on wrist or ankle bands;
- eyebrows shaved or lines shaved through them;
- tattoos;
- wearing specific symbols;
- wearing sunglasses on back of head;
- tongue hanging out of one shoe;
- one pant leg rolled up;
- rubber banding pant legs up or down;
- shirt collars turned up on one side only; and/or
- burn marks (brands) on the arms, hands or chest.

#### **B. Gang Behaviors**

The following non-exclusive list denotes some possible examples of gang-related behaviors:

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- advocating drug use;
- advocating violence or other unlawful or disruptive behavior;
- talking gang-related jargon;
- using hand gestures;
- marking territory with graffiti or gang symbols (tagging). Materials used to do this include spray paint, markers, items used for scratching, etc.;
- carrying and using weapons; and/or
- writing or drawing/sketching gang-related information on notebooks, paper, school books, etc.

Staff can expect to be tested constantly by the subtle and changing forms of gang symbols.

Wearing particular apparel does not, by itself, imply that a student is a gang wannabe, affiliate, or member. One student might wear a Star of David pendant for the innocent purpose of proclaiming the student's Jewish faith, for instance, while another student might wear a Star of David pendant to proclaim membership in a particular gang.

In cases where an item of apparel or an accessory may have an innocent purpose, but could also be gang-related, students shall be given the opportunity to rebut any accusation that an item has gang significance.

**C. Influence of Gangs**

At the principal's discretion, staff members may use the following techniques to discourage the influence of gangs:

1. Any student wearing or carrying overt gang paraphernalia or making gestures that symbolize gang affiliation or membership will be referred to the principal or designee. The student's parents/guardians will be contacted and appropriate disciplinary action will be imposed;
2. Any graffiti on school premises shall be quietly removed, washed down or painted over as soon as discovered. Not only does this immediate removal signal that school

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property is not the gang's property, it also discourages rival gangs from responding with more graffiti, or worse, defacing their rival's symbols, which can lead to retaliation and violence.

Daily checks for graffiti will be made throughout the campus, including restroom walls and doors. Graffiti may be photographed prior to removal. Photographs may be shared with law enforcement authorities and/or may be used in disciplinary proceedings or future criminal action against the offenders;

3. Classroom and after school programs at each school will be designed to enhance individual self-esteem, provide positive reinforcement for acceptable behavior and foster interest in a variety of wholesome activities; and
4. Staff members will actively promote membership in authorized student organizations which can provide students companionship, safety and a sense of purpose and belonging.

**D. Gang Prevention Education**

Gang prevention instruction offered in the schools may:

1. explain the dangers of gang membership;
2. include lessons in nonviolent conflict resolution and gang avoidance skills;
3. promote constructive activities available in the community;
4. involve students in structured, goal-oriented community service projects/programs;
5. encourage positive school behavior;
6. explain the nature of local gang apparel and graffiti;
7. identify warning signs which may indicate that children are at risk of becoming

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involved with gangs; and/or

8. assist students who seek help in rejecting gang associations and refer them to community-based gang suppression and prevention organizations.

Gang prevention lessons may be taught jointly by teachers, law enforcement officers and community agencies.

**E. Disciplinary Action**

The principal or designee shall take appropriate disciplinary action for students engaging in gang activity that violates District policy, including JK, Student Discipline (District Conduct Discipline Code), JKD/JKE, Suspension/Expulsion of Students or JICI, Weapons in Schools. The principal or designee(s) shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter gang intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs. Law enforcement shall be contacted, as needed, to assist in any gang-related activities and/or confrontation.

**F. School and Community Sharing**

Information sharing is vital. The Superintendent or designee shall establish and maintain open lines of communication with local law enforcement and community agencies so as to share (to the extent allowed by law) vital information and provide mutual support in the effort to control gang activity.

LEGAL REFS.: C.R.S. 22-1-120(8)

CROSS REFS.: JICI, Weapons in School  
JIH, Student Interrogations, Searches and Arrests  
JK, Student Discipline – District Conduct and Discipline Code  
JKD/JKE, Suspension/Expulsion of Students