

## HAZING POLICY

### **ANTI-HAZING LAW - PA Act 2016-31**

PA House Bill 1574, July 22, 2016, amends the PA Anti-Hazing Law so that it extends the applicability of that law to public and private secondary schools (grades 7-12). It includes schools with any of these grade levels, therefore, K-8 elementary schools are also required to adhere to this law. Saint Michael School is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for our students. The school recognizes that hazing creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning. Therefore, Saint Michael School prohibits hazing of any form in the school setting or related to any school activity.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to maintain safe, positive, Christian environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the mission of St. Michael School and are prohibited at all times.

**Definitions:** For the purposes of this policy **Hazing** is defined as – *Any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization. The term shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion for social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, or any willful destruction or removal of public or private property. For purposes of the definition, any activity as described in this definition upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be “forced” activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in which activity notwithstanding.*

**School Setting** - By definition, a school setting includes the school building itself, school grounds, school vehicles, designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

**Reporting:** St. Michael School does not condone any form of initiation or harassment, known as hazing, as part of any school-sponsored student activity. No student, coach, advisor, volunteer, or school employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist or engage in any hazing activity. St. Michael School encourages students who have been hazed to promptly report such incidents to a teacher, coach, or school principal. In addition, any student, school employee, or person associated with the school is requested to report hazing that is either discussed or observed.

School principal shall investigate promptly all complaints of hazing and will administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy. Confidentiality of all parties will be maintained. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of hazing.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from hazing. Every teacher, coach, and activity supervisor will review this policy annually with students. The policy shall be posted on the school website.

St. Michael School shall annually inform students, parents/guardians, coaches, advisors, volunteers, and staff that hazing of school students is prohibited, by means of:

1. Distribution of written policy through the Youth Activity Handbook and Parent Handbook.
2. Verbal instruction by the coach or advisor at the start of the season or program.

**Complaint Procedure:**

1. When a student believes that s/he has been subject to hazing, the students shall promptly report the incident, orally or in writing to the principal.
2. The principal shall conduct a timely, impartial, thorough, and comprehensive investigation of the alleged hazing.
3. The principal shall prepare a written report summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint. Findings of the investigation shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, and others directly involved, as appropriate and to the parent/guardian of those involved.
4. If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the principal shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the Discipline Policy that may include, but shall not be limited to: Counseling within the school, Parental conference, Loss of school privileges, Detention, Exclusion from school-sponsored activities, Suspension. Additionally, the student may be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or advisor, up to and including removal from the activity.
5. If the investigation results in a substantiated finding that a coach or advisor affiliated with the activity planned, directed, encouraged, assisted, condoned or ignored any form of hazing, s/he will be disciplined appropriately. Discipline could include dismissal from the position as coach or advisor.

**Revised 8/10/2017**