

GANG PREVENTION

The Governing Board of the Poway Unified School District believes in a safe and orderly environment for students and desires to keep district schools and students free from the harmful influence of gangs and gang behavior. Therefore, the Board encourages activities that will allow students to pursue their common interests in a positive way and to resist peer pressure to become involved in gang activity. The Board prohibits behavior that promotes gang activity or any behavior that provokes confrontation, violence, or disruption of the school environment.

The Board also believes that discretion and good judgment must be exercised by school officials in the implementation of this policy to ensure that the individual rights of students are protected.

Prohibition of Gang Activity

The purpose of BP and AR 5136 is to help school officials maintain a safe and orderly learning environment for our students. "All students and staff of primary, elementary, junior high, and senior high schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure, and peaceful." (California Constitution, Article 1, Section 28[c])

A part of maintaining a safe and orderly environment is to keep our schools free from the influence of gangs. Our primary strategies are to provide avenues for students to share their common interests in a positive and productive manner, and to provide education to students, staff, and parents. Information should be provided on the harmful effects of gang activity, on clothing and behaviors that may indicate gang affiliation, on how to resist peer pressure to become involved with gangs, and on opportunities for students to become involved in positive group activities.

Extreme caution must be exercised in the application of this policy to ensure that the rights of students are protected. A student's behavior and/or clothing must pose a threat to a safe and orderly environment to warrant disciplinary action. A single act, such as the wearing of certain apparel, may not constitute gang activity. In such cases, school officials shall counsel students and parents regarding the potential consequences of clothing or behavior that could be interpreted as gang related. However, when a student persists in behaving in ways that indicate gang affiliation or when a student's behavior poses a threat to a safe and orderly environment, disciplinary action shall be taken, including suspension and/or expulsion when warranted.

The following guidelines shall be in effect on all Poway Unified School District campuses:

1. No student on or about school property or at any school activity shall wear any apparel, which by virtue of color, arrangement, or any attribute, denotes membership or affiliation with any gang. Schools may communicate with students and parents those items of apparel or manner of dress which may suggest gang affiliation or place students at risk

GANG PREVENTION (continued)

of harm from others who may think students are affiliated with gangs as a result of their dress.

The district will assist the sites by providing up-to-date information regarding gang apparel. The site staff, working with students and parents, will develop guidelines for student dress for their school and distribute them prior to the beginning of the school year. Involving the school representative to the District Human Relation Advisory Committee is recommended.

Students will be asked to remove or change clothing that suggests gang affiliation. Refusal to do so or repeated offenses shall be considered defiance of authority and will result in suspension from school.

2. No student on or about school property or at any school activity shall commit any act or display of behavior, either verbal or nonverbal, showing membership or affiliation in a gang. Examples of such acts include, but are not limited to: gestures, speech, handshakes, and signals.
3. No student on or about school property or at any school activity shall use any speech or commit any act in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity. Examples of such speech or acts include, but are not limited to: soliciting others for membership in any gang; requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person; loitering with the intent to intimidate and/or harass any person; inciting other students to act with physical violence upon any other person; the propagation of any gang related graffiti.
4. Statistics regarding gang related disciplinary action will be made available to the Board and to interested parent groups each semester.