

## GANG ACTIVITY OR ASSOCIATION

The **Essex County** School Board recognizes the existence of gangs in the community and the threat they pose to the educational environment. Therefore, students shall not engage in gang activity on school grounds, on school buses or on any school sponsored activity. In addition, students shall not engage in gang activity using the Essex County Public School Division computer system at any time. A gang is defined as any group of three or more persons whose purpose includes:

- commission of illegal acts
- participation in activities that threaten the safety of persons or property
- disruption of the school environment
- creation of an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

Students are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Policy JFC Student Conduct and the Standards of Student Conduct issued by the superintendent for participating in gang activity. Gang activity is defined as:

- wearing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other thing that is evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang;
- committing any act, or using any speech, either verbal or non-verbal (such as gestures or handshakes) showing membership or affiliation in a gang;
- using any speech or committing any act in furtherance of the interests of any gang, including: (a) soliciting, hazing and initiating others for membership in any gang, (b) requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person, (c) committing any other illegal act or other violation of school policy and inciting other students to act with physical violence;
- inappropriate congregating, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, degradation, disgrace and/or related activities which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or mental harm to students, employees or visitors.

The superintendent or superintendent's designee, in cooperation with local law enforcement and/or juvenile agencies, develops and regularly updates a regulation listing known gang clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, signs, gestures, handshakes and symbols.

The superintendent or superintendent's designee provides in-service training in gang behavior and characteristics to facilitate staff identification of students at-risk of gang involvement and promote membership in authorized school groups and/or activities as an alternative.

Adopted: 8/12/2019

Revised: 5/10/2021

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Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, as amended, §§ 18.2-46.1, 22.1-70, 22.1-78, 22.1-79(2),  
22.1-276.01, 22.1-279.6.

Cross Refs: IIBEA/GAB Acceptable Computer System Use  
JFC Student Conduct