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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick 
DATE: February 22, 2011
SUBJECT: Adopt the *Model Policy to Address Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior*

PURPOSE:

To adopt the proposed *Model Policy to Address Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior* (Attachment I).

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Chapter 188 of the Acts of the 2010 Maryland General Assembly, *The Safe Schools Act of 2010*, was passed and subsequently enrolled into law. The law affected a number of areas concerning the responsibilities that public school systems, law enforcement, other public agencies, and the courts have to report and share information with each other pertaining to certain students.

A major component of the law is the requirement for the Maryland State Board of Education (MSBE) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop, in consultation and collaboration with the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS), the Department of State Police, the Department of Human Resources (DHR), and local school systems (LSSs), a model policy to address gangs, gang activity, and other destructive or illegal group behavior in schools. Once approved by the MSBE, the model policy will be distributed to the State's 24 LSSs to be used by them and their prescribed stakeholder representatives to develop their own policies to address gangs, gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior in schools.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Although the law required representatives only from MSDE, LSSs, the State Police, the DJS, and the DHR to develop the model policy, individuals from a variety of backgrounds and professional disciplines were invited to participate in a workgroup to develop the model policy. Attachment III contains the names of the members from the following agencies and stakeholder groups who served on the workgroup: 1. Local law enforcement; 2. State Police; 3. LSSs; 4. MSDE; 5. DJS; 6. DHR; 7. Maryland Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; 8. U.S. District Attorney's Office; 9. Maryland Attorney General's Office; 10. American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland; 11. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; 12. Maryland Association for Resources for Families; 13. Strayer University; 14. University of Maryland Law School – Baltimore; 15. Maryland Association of Resource Officers;

16. Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention; 17. Maryland Association of Boards of Education; 18. Montgomery County Office of the Public Defender; and, 19. Office of the Speaker of the House of Delegates. It was felt that such diverse representation would provide a wealth of expertise from which to draw and would allow for the model policy to be a viable, useful document.

Two formal meetings were held to discuss the workgroup's charge, examine any resources, and begin developing a draft model policy for Maryland based on the law's requirements. Between and after the formal meetings, further discussion among workgroup members was conducted electronically. Due to the diverse representation of the workgroup, its members were able to solicit and provide further input and suggestions from their agencies' personnel. Additional input and comments were sought from the superintendents of the 24 LSSs and their Directors of Student Services. All comments and feedback were examined and consideration was given to their inclusion in the draft model policy.

ACTION:

Adopt the proposed *Model Policy to Address Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior*.

NSG:DMR

Attachments

Model Policy to Address Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior, February 22, 2011