

1 The [Transylvania County Board of Education](#) (the “board”) strives to create a safe, orderly,
2 caring, and inviting school environment. Gangs and gang-related activities have proven contrary
3 to that mission and are prohibited within the schools. A gang is any ongoing organization,
4 association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its
5 primary activities the commission of criminal acts and having a common name or common
6 identifying sign, colors, or symbols. The violence and crime that accompany gangs pose a
7 serious threat to the safety of students and employees of the school system. Even absent acts of
8 violence or crime, the existence of gang-related activity within the schools creates an atmosphere
9 of fear and hostility that obstructs student learning and achievement. Thus, the board condemns
10 the existence of gangs and will not tolerate gang-related activity in the school system.

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12 **A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR**

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14 Gang-related activity is strictly prohibited within the schools. For the purposes of this
15 policy, “gang-related activity” means: (1) any conduct that is prohibited by another board
16 policy and is engaged in by a student on behalf of an identified gang or as a result of the
17 student’s gang membership; or (2) any conduct engaged in by a student to perpetuate,
18 proliferate, or display the existence of any identified gang.

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20 Conduct prohibited by this policy includes:

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22 1. wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing,
23 jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, or other items with the intent to
24 convey membership or affiliation in a gang;
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26 2. communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans,
27 drawings, etc.) with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang;
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29 3. tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with symbols or
30 slogans intended to convey membership or affiliation in a gang (see policy 4330,
31 Theft, Trespass, and Damage to Property);
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33 4. requiring payment of protection, insurance, or otherwise intimidating or
34 threatening any person related to gang activity (see policy 4331, Assaults,
35 Threats, and Harassment);
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37 5. inciting others to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other
38 person related to gang activity (see policy 4331);
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40 6. soliciting others for gang membership; and
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42 7. committing any other illegal act or other violation of school system policies in
43 connection with gang-related activity.
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B. NOTICE

The superintendent or designee shall regularly consult with law enforcement officials to maintain current examples of gang-related activities, including but not limited to gang names and particularized examples of potential gang indicators including symbols, hand signals, graffiti, clothing, accessories, and behaviors. Each principal shall maintain a list of current examples of gang-related activities to assist students, parents, and teachers in identifying gang symbols and practices. The list shall be available in an easily accessible location in the main office of the school. Parents, students, and school employees may, upon request, access the list, which shall include a warning that wearing or displaying clothing, hand signs, or symbols identified in the list with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in any gang may subject a student to discipline under this policy.

In addition, the Code of Student Conduct and all student handbooks (or such other similar materials distributed to parents and students in lieu of a student handbook) shall contain notice that (1) current information on gang-related activities is maintained in the main office at each school; (2) information on gang-related activities is subject to change and the principal should be consulted for updates; and (3) wearing or displaying clothing, hand signs, or symbols identified in the list with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in any gang may subject a student to discipline under this policy. The Code of Student Conduct and student handbook (or such other similar materials) also shall provide the addresses of websites that contain additional information identifying gang signs, symbols, clothing, and other gang indicators.

In providing this information for students and parents, the board acknowledges that not all potential gang indicators connote actual membership in a gang.

C. CONSEQUENCES

Before being punished for a violation of subsection A.1 or A.2, above, a student shall receive an individualized warning as to what item or conduct is in violation of this policy and shall be permitted to immediately change or remove any prohibited items. A student may be punished only if he or she previously received notice that the specific item or conduct is prohibited.

Disciplinary consequences for violations of subsections A.1, A.2, and A.6, above, shall be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of these subsections.

Violations of subsections A.3, A.4, A.5, and A.7, above, are violations of both this policy and other board policies. Disciplinary consequences for such violations shall be consistent with Section D of policy 4300 and the specific range of consequences listed in

89 the Code of Student Conduct for the other board policy violated. That the violation was
90 gang-related shall be an aggravating factor when determining the appropriate
91 consequences.

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93 In a situation where a student has violated this policy or is otherwise suspected of gang
94 affiliation through other circumstantial evidence, the principal shall conduct an
95 intervention involving the principal and/or assistant principal, the student, and the
96 student's parent. Such intervention also may include the school resource officer and
97 others as appropriate. The purpose of an intervention is to discuss school officials'
98 observations and concerns and to offer the student and his or her parents information and
99 an opportunity to ask questions or provide other information to the school officials.

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101 This policy shall be applied in a non-discriminatory manner based on the objective
102 characteristics of the student's conduct in light of the surrounding circumstances.

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104 Legal References: G.S. 115C-390.2

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106 Cross References: Student Behavior Policies (policy 4300), Student Dress Code (policy 4316),
107 Theft, Trespass, and Damage to Property (policy 4330), Assaults, Threats, and Harassment
108 (policy 4331), Criminal Behavior (policy 4335)

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110 Adopted: