

## **Policy to Address Criminal Organizations and Criminal Organization Activity in Schools**

This policy has been established in collaboration with the following shared interest groups

- parents;
- school employees;
- local law enforcement officials;
- the county public defender;
- organizations that have expertise in criminal organization education, prevention, or intervention; and
- a school behavioral health or community mental health professional.

This policy will be posted:

- on the school web site;
- in the staff shared drive.

Victory College Prep will establish the following educational programs in an effort to address criminal organization activity:

- An evidence based educational criminal organization awareness program for students, school employees, and parents led by the schools' Safety Coordinator
- A school employee development program to provide the training to school employees in the implementation of the criminal organization policy led by the schools' Safety Coordinator.

Victory College Prep shall establish an advisory committee, led by the schools' Safety Coordinator, that seeks to include the following members:

- Parents
- School employees
- Local law enforcement officials
- The county prosecuting attorney
- The county public defender
- A juvenile court judge
- A school behavioral health or community mental health professional

Representatives of organizations that have expertise in criminal organization education, prevention, or intervention, and any other person or entity the governing body determines is appropriate.

Before June 2 of each year, Victory College Prep shall submit to the department a written report, on forms developed by the department, outlining the activities undertaken as part of the school corporation's compliance with this policy. The report will include school-based data to monitor for disproportionality, reporting the number of investigations disposed of internally and the number of cases referred to local law enforcement, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, and gender.

A school employee shall report any incidence of suspected criminal organization activity, criminal organization intimidation, or criminal organization recruitment to the principal and the school safety specialist.

The principal and the school safety specialist may take appropriate action to maintain a safe and secure school environment, including providing appropriate intervention services.

It is the policy of Victory College Prep to prohibit criminal organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior on school property or school buses or at school-sponsored functions.

It is the policy of Victory College Prep to prohibit reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report criminal organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders, or others with reliable information about an act of criminal organization activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior.

### **Definitions**

"Criminal organization" defined (per IC 35-45-9-1)- "criminal organization" means a group with at least three (3) members that specifically: (1) either: (A) promotes, sponsors, or assists in; or (B) participates in; or (2) requires as a condition of membership or continued membership; the commission of a felony or an act that would be a felony if committed by an adult or the offense of battery (IC 35-42-2-1).

"Criminal Organization Activity"- a student who knowingly or intentionally actively participates in a criminal organization, or a student who knowingly or intentionally solicits, recruits, entices, or intimidates another individual to join a criminal organization.

### **Procedures for Reporting Suspected Criminal Organization Activity**

Per IC 20-33-9-10.5, a school employee shall report any incidence of suspected criminal organization activity, criminal organization intimidation, or criminal organization recruitment to the principal and the school safety specialist. The principal and the school safety specialist may take appropriate action to maintain a safe and secure school environment, including providing appropriate intervention services.

Appropriate consequences and remedial actions are those that are graded according to the severity of the offenses and consider both the developmental ages of the student offenders and students' histories of inappropriate behaviors, per the code of student conduct.

Any school and school employee who promptly reports an incident of suspected criminal organization activity and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures of this policy, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.

The principal or designee shall conduct a thorough and complete investigation for each report of suspected criminal organization activity. The investigation shall be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee within one school day of the report of the incident. The principal may appoint additional personnel and request the assistance of law enforcement to assist in the investigation for the administrator's safety. The investigation shall be completed and the written findings submitted to the principal as soon as possible, but not later than five (5) school days from the date of the report of the alleged incident of criminal organization activity.

The principal shall submit the report to the Executive Director within ten (10) school days of the completion of the investigation. The Executive Director or their designee shall report the results of each investigation to the board of directors on a quarterly basis during regularly scheduled board meetings.

Each school within the Network shall record the number of investigations disposed of internally and the number of cases referred to local law enforcement, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, and gender. Each school shall report this information to the Executive Director who shall submit a written report to the Indiana Department of Education by June 2 of each year.

The principal shall provide the parents of the students who are parties to any investigation with information about the investigation, in accordance with Federal and State law and regulation. The information to be provided to parents includes the nature of the investigation, whether the corporation found evidence of criminal organization activity, and whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the activity. This information is to be provided in an expedited manner.

The Executive Director is authorized to define the range of ways in which school staff and the principal or the principal's designee shall respond once an incident of criminal organization activity is confirmed, according to the parameters described in the corporation's code of student conduct. The school board recognizes that some acts of criminal organization activity may be isolated incidents requiring that the school officials respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious that they require a response either at the school level or by local law enforcement officials.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who engages in criminal organization activity may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

The principal shall proceed in accordance with the code of student conduct, as appropriate, based on the investigation findings. As appropriate to the investigation findings, the principal shall ensure the code of student conduct has been implemented, and provide intervention and/or relevant support services (i.e., refer to counseling, establish training programs to reduce criminal organization activity and enhance school climate, enlist parent corporation and involvement or take other appropriate action). The principal shall inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents, and, as appropriate, may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services.

The Executive Director shall annually disseminate this policy to all parents who have children enrolled in a school within the school corporation. The Executive Director shall ensure that notice of the corporation's policy appears in the student handbooks and all other publications of the school that set forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards for schools within the school.

### **Information About Types of Services**

Victory College Prep will provide information about the supports and services available for students who are 'at risk' for and/or suspected of participating in criminal organization activity and their families. Information about other available supports and services, will be consistent with the policies and procedures of the board of directors.

Examples of services include:

- Criminal organization awareness education (for students, parents, school faculty/personnel, law enforcement, and community stakeholders) that at the least shows promise of effectiveness based on research. The criminal organization awareness education information will be revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in criminal organization and criminal organization-like activity.
- Culturally and/or linguistically appropriate services/supports for parents and families.
- Counseling coupled with mentoring for students and their families.
- Community and civic groups.
- Viable, sustainable after-school programs developed in collaboration with other stakeholders.
- Job training and employment opportunities as both a deterrent to criminal organization involvement and an incentive to leave criminal organization involvement.
- School sanctioned/facilitated extra-curricular activities.

### **Criminal Organization Prevention and Intervention Services Programs**

Victory College Prep will:

- Provide training for staff and teachers on criminal organization prevention and intervention resources within a jurisdiction on a periodic basis. The criminal organization awareness information will be revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in criminal organization activity.
- Create formalized collaboration plans between local school leadership and community-based prevention and intervention providers (using the existing County Safe School Commissions as points of contact). The formalized collaborations will make effective, coordinated, and maximized use of federal funding a priority.
- Coordinate resources and funding opportunities to support criminal organization prevention and intervention activities.