

CODE F2
(REQUIRED)

POLICY ON NONDISCRIMINATORY MASCOTS AND SCHOOL BRANDING

This policy is issued by the Vermont Agency of Education and located within the VSBA model policy manual for reference.

ADOPTION NOTES – This text box and the disclaimer should be removed prior to adoption.

(a) General – As with all model policies, VSBA recommends that each board carefully review this model prior to adoption to assure suitability with the district’s own specific circumstances, internal coding system, current policies, and organizational structures. Highlighted language or blank, underscored spaces indicate areas which Boards must change/complete to reflect local personnel titles, policy references, duty assignments etc.

(b) Legal references are listed for convenience, but do not need to be included in the policy as adopted.

(c) Any model policies listed under “cross-reference” indicate a reference to another related VSBA model policy. A district should check its own current policies to assure internal consistency.

(d) Withdrawn and earlier versions of revised policies should be maintained separately as part of the permanent records of the District.

Statement of Policy

It is the policy of the _____ School District (District) to provide welcoming, positive, and inclusive learning environments for all students by prohibiting the use of discriminatory school branding, which undermines the educational experiences of members of all communities and perpetuates negative stereotypes.

Definitions

1. **“School”** means a public school or an independent school approved under section 166 of Title 16.
2. **“School board”** or **“Board”** means the board of directors or other governing body of an educational institution when referring to an independent school.
3. **“School branding”** means any name, symbol, or image used by a school as a mascot, nickname, logo, letterhead, team name, slogan, motto, or other identifier.

Administrative Responsibilities

The superintendent or designee shall:

1. periodically review and provide recommendations for necessary updates to the nondiscriminatory school branding policy as necessary;
2. assist the school board in its review of the district’s school branding to ensure compliance with the policy following any school branding changes or updates to the policy;
3. assist the school board in ensuring the prohibition of school branding that directly or

- indirectly references or stereotypes the likeness, features, symbols, traditions, or other characteristics that are specific to either:
- a. the race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity of any person or group of persons; or
 - b. any person, group of persons, or organization associated with the repression of others;
4. Develop a procedure for an individual to file a complaint that an element of school branding is in violation of the policy.

Complaints

An individual may request an opportunity to appear before the Board for purposes of presenting the complaint, relevant facts, and further explanations. The board shall hear the complaint in a fair and just manner. The Board shall render a decision within 45 days of the hearing, which must include a summary of facts and basis for the decision.

If the individual is unsatisfied with the Board's decision, the individual may appeal the decision to the Secretary of Education. Appeals shall be filed within 30 days of the school board's decision by sending a written notice of appeal to the Agency of Education.

<i>VSBA Review Date</i>	<i>August 15, 2022</i>
<i>Date Warned</i>	
<i>Date Adopted</i>	
<i>Legal References</i>	<i>16 V.S.A. § 568</i>
<i>Cross References</i>	<i>District Equity Policy</i>

DISCLAIMER: This model policy has been prepared by the Vermont School Boards Association for the sole and exclusive use of VSBA members, as a resource to assist member school boards with their policy development. School Districts should consult with legal counsel and revise model policies to address local facts and circumstances prior to adoption, unless the model policy states otherwise. VSBA continually makes revisions based on school districts' needs and local, state and federal laws, regulations and court decisions, and other relevant education activity.