

<h1>POLICY</h1>	2018	7492
	Students	

Subject: Dignity for all Students Act (DASA)

The Board of Education recognizes that learning environments that are safe and supportive can increase student attendance and improve academic achievement. A student's ability to learn and achieve high academic standards, and a school's ability to educate students, is compromised by incidents of discriminating or harassing conduct, including but not limited to bullying, taunting and discrimination. Therefore, in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act, Education Law, Article 2, the District will strive to create an environment free of bullying, discriminating and/or harassing conduct and will foster civility in the schools to prevent and prohibit conduct which is inconsistent with the District's educational mission. Since cyber bullying is a form of bullying, the term "bullying" as used in this policy will implicitly include cyber bullying even if it is not explicitly stated.

The District prohibits and will not tolerate all forms of bullying, discriminating and/or harassing conduct toward students based on, but not limited to, actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex by school employees or students on school property and at school-sponsored activities and events that take place at locations off school property. In addition, any acts occurring off school property when the actions create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment or where it is foreseeable that the conduct might reach school property.

Dignity Act Coordinator

At least one (1) employee at every school shall be designated as the Dignity Act Coordinator(s). This employee must be licensed and/or certified as a classroom teacher, school counselor, psychologist, nurse, social worker, administrator, supervisor or Superintendent of Schools. The Dignity Act Coordinator(s) will be thoroughly trained as required by law. The Board of Education shall appoint the Dignity Act Coordinator(s) and share the name(s) and contact information with all school personnel, students, and parents/persons in parental relation, which shall include, but is not limited to, providing the name, designated school and contact information by:

- a) Listing such information in the Code of Conduct and updates posted on the Internet website, if available;
- b) Including such information in the plain language summary of the Code of Conduct provided to all persons in parental relation to students before the beginning of each school year;
- c) Providing such information to parents and persons of parental relation in at least one district or school mailing or other method of distribution including, but not limited to, sending such information home with each student and, if such information changes, in at least one subsequent district or school mailing or other such method of distribution as soon as practicable thereafter;

<h1>POLICY</h1>	2018	7492
	Students	

Subject: Dignity for all Students Act (DASA) (Continued)

- d) Posting such information in highly visible areas of school buildings;
- e) Making such information available at the district and school-level administrative offices.

If a Dignity Act Coordinator vacates his/her position, another school employee shall immediately be designated for an interim appointment as Coordinator, pending approval from the Board of Education, within thirty (30) days of the date the position was vacated. In the event a Coordinator is unable to perform the duties of the position for an extended period of time, another school employee shall immediately be designated for an interim appointment as Coordinator, pending return of the previous Coordinator to the position.

The District must provide the change in information to parents or persons in parental relation as soon as practicable. The change in name and/or contact information of the Dignity Act Coordinator will not constitute a revision to the *Code of Conduct* so as to require a public hearing.

Training and Awareness

The Superintendent or designee(s) shall establish guidelines for training which shall be approved by the Board of Education. Training will be provided each school year for all District employees in conjunction with existing professional development training to raise staff awareness and sensitivity of bullying, discriminating and/or harassing conduct directed at students by anyone on school property, at a school function, or off school property when those actions create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment.

Training will include ways to promote a supportive school environment that is free from bullying, discrimination and/or harassment. Training shall:

- a) Raise awareness and sensitivity;
- b) Address social patterns and the effects on students;
- c) Inform employees on the identification and mitigation of such acts;
- d) Provide strategies for effectively addressing problems of exclusion, bias and aggression;
- e) Include safe and supportive school climate concepts in curriculum and classroom management; and
- f) Be designed to provide for the effective implementation of school policy on conduct and discipline.

Instruction in grades Kindergarten through 12 shall include a component on civility, citizenship and character education. Such component shall instruct students on the principles of honesty, tolerance, personal responsibility, respect for others, observance of laws and rules, courtesy, dignity and other traits which will enhance the quality of their experiences in, and contributions to, the community. For the purposes of this policy, "tolerance," "respect for others" and "dignity" shall include awareness and sensitivity to bullying, discrimination

<h1>POLICY</h1>	2018	7492
	Students	

Subject: Dignity for all Students Act (DASA) (Continued)

and/or harassment and civility in the relations of people of different races, weights, national origins, ethnic groups, religions, religious practices, mental or physical abilities, sexual orientations, genders and sexes.

Rules against bullying, discriminating and/or harassing conduct will be included in the Code of Conduct, publicized District-wide and disseminated to all staff and parents. An age-appropriate summary shall be distributed to all students at a school assembly at the beginning of each school year.

Reports and Investigations of Bullying, Discrimination and/or Harassment

The District will investigate all complaints of bullying, discriminating and/or harassing conduct, either formal or informal, and take prompt corrective measures, as necessary. School employees who witness or receive a report (oral or written) of this type of misconduct must orally notify the Superintendent, Principal, or their designee *no later than one (1) school day* after witnessing or receiving a report of such incident. The employee must then file a written report *within two (2) school days* after making the oral report. If, after an appropriate investigation, the District finds that this policy has been violated, corrective action will be taken in accordance with District policies and regulations, the *Code of Conduct*, and all appropriate federal or state laws. The Superintendent, Principal or their designee shall notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when it is believed that any harassment, bullying and/or discrimination constitute criminal conduct.

The District will annually report material incidents of bullying, discrimination and/or harassment which occurred during the school year to the State Education Department. Such report shall be submitted in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner, on or before the basic educational data system (BEDS) reporting deadline or such other date as determined by the Commissioner. SED has developed a form for gathering data titled, "Reports of Incidents Concerning School Safety and the Educational Climate" which can be found on the NYSED website.

Prohibition of Retaliatory Behavior (Commonly Known as "Whistle-Blower" Protection)

Any person who has reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been subjected to bullying, discriminating and/or harassing conduct by an employee or student, on school grounds or at a school function, who acts reasonably and in good faith and reports such information to school officials or law enforcement authorities, shall have immunity from any civil liability that may arise from making such report. The Board prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed at complainants, victims, witnesses and/or any other individuals who participated in the investigation of a complaint of this nature.

POLICY	2018	7492
	Students	

Subject: Dignity for all Students Act (DASA) (Continued)

Education Law Sections 10-18 and 801-a
 8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Section 100.2(jj),
 100.2(kk), and 100.2(1)(2)

Approved: Board of Education
 August 8, 2012

Approved: Board of Education
 July 10, 2013

Approved: Board of Education
 June 15, 2016

Approved: Board of Education
 May 23, 2018