DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT REGULATION &
School Safety and Educational Climate (SSEC Reporting)

Reporting Complaints

Any student who believes they have been the victim of bullying, harassment or discrimination by a student or district employee, is encouraged to and should report complaints as soon as possible after the incident in order to enable the district to effectively investigate and resolve the complaint. Victims are encouraged to submit the complaint in writing, however, complaints may be filed verbally.

All incidents of bullying, harassment and discrimination must be reported to a staff member regardless of where the bullying, harassment or discrimination takes place. Students should bring their complaints to the attention of any staff member. Staff members must make an oral report promptly of all complaints of bullying, harassment, and discrimination that they receive from students or others, whether oral or written, as well as any instances of bullying, harassment or discrimination that they are aware of, to the Principal or their designee, of the school where the incident occurred not later than one (1) school day after receipt of a report or witnessing an incident and must file a written report with the Principal, or their designee, of the school where the incident occurred not later than two (2) school days after making the oral report.

Any staff member who receives a complaint of sexual harassment from a student shall inform the student of the staff member's obligation to report the complaint to the school administration, and then shall immediately notify the School District's Title IX officer for investigation in accordance the District Policy 0111 Sexual Harassment of Students. Any bullying harassment or discrimination involving criminal activity, or where there is reasonable belief criminal activity may occur, must be immediately reported to the Principal or their designee where the incident occurred. If the Principal or their designee where the incident occurred believes that any harassment, bullying or discrimination constitutes criminal conduct, he/she shall promptly notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency.

In order to assist investigators, victims should document the bullying, harassment or discrimination as soon as it occurs and with as much detail as possible including: the nature of the bullying, harassment or discrimination; dates, time places it has occurred; name of bully, harasser or discriminating person, witnesses of the bullying, harassment or discrimination, and the victim's response, if any, to the bullying, harassment or discrimination.

Investigation and Recommendations

The Building Level DASA Coordinator, by authority of the School District and the Board, shall immediately initiate an investigation upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging bullying, harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy. In the event that the Building Level DASA Coordinator is unavailable to conduct the investigation, another Building Level DASA Coordinator or the Building Principal shall be permitted to conduct the investigation.

If the Building Level DASA Coordinator is the subject of the complaint, the investigating party shall be either the Principal or a third party designated by the Superintendent.

In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes bullying, harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy, the School District should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constituted bullying, harassment or discrimination requires a determination based upon all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods or documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.

In addition, the School District may take immediate steps at its discretion, to protect the complainant, students and employees pending completion of an investigation of alleged bullying, harassment or discrimination.

The investigating party shall make a final written report, which shall include a recommendation as to whether the alleged conduct is founded and constitutes a material incident of harassment, discrimination and/or bullying to the Superintendent and the Building Principal upon completion of the investigation, but no later than 30 working days from the initial receipt of the complaint. If the Superintendent is the subject of the complaint, the final report shall be submitted to the Board.

School District Action

Upon receipt of a recommendation that the conduct constitutes a material incident of harassment, discrimination and/or bullying, the Principal shall take appropriate action based on the results of the investigation and shall ensure that prompt action will be taken by the school where the incident occurred to address the verified allegations. If the Principal is the subject of the complaint, such action shall be taken by the Superintendent. The result of the investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures shall be reported in writing to the complainant by the Building Level DASA Coordinator. If the Building Level DASA Coordinator is the subject of the complaint, such report shall be made by the Building Principal. The report shall document any disciplinary action taken as a result of the complaint.

The District may take disciplinary action against any person found to have maliciously filed a false complaint.

Retaliation Prohibited

The District will discipline any individual who retaliates against any person who reports alleged bullying, harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy or who retaliates against any person who initiates, testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing related to a bullying, harassment or discrimination complaint. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

Right to Alternative Complaint Procedures

These procedures do not deny or limit the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse, which may include filing charges with the New York State Department of Human Rights or initiating civil action or seeking redress under state criminal statutes and/or federal law.

Discipline

Any School District action taken pursuant to this policy and regulation will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, applicable law, the School District's Code of Conduct and School District policies. Actions will be reasonably calculated to end the harassment, bullying or discrimination, eliminate any hostile environment, create a more positive school culture and climate, prevent recurrence of behavior, and ensure the safety of the student(s) against whom the bullying, harassment or discrimination was directed. Actions shall be consistent with the guidelines created by the School District, in accordance with law and this policy, for

measured, balanced and age-appropriate responses to instances of harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Recommended Report Form

See exhibit 0116-E which follows.

Dissemination

This policy and regulation shall be distributed to every employee of the District upon initial employment and at the beginning of September of every year thereafter.

An age-appropriate, plain language abstract or summary of this policy and regulation shall be distributed to every student in grades 6-12 annually and reviewed and discussed with students during the first two weeks of each September. Students who enroll in the school after the review in September shall receive a copy of this policy and regulation, under their initial registration. The student's guidance counselor shall review the policy and regulation with the student at that time.

An abstract or summary of this policy and regulation shall be reviewed with and explained to all students in grades K-5 in a plain-language, age-appropriate fashion.

A summary of the policy and regulation shall be published annually in the student's handbook and an employee's newsletter.

Role of the Dignity Act Coordinator(s)

The Board of Education will annually designate at least one staff member in each building, as the Building Level DASA Coordinator who will be accountable for implementation of this policy and regulation. The Building Level DASA Coordinator(s) will be approved by the board, instructed in the provisions of the Dignity for All Students Act, thoroughly trained in human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and sex and provided training as mandated by the Commissioner's Regulations. The Building Level DASA Coordinator(s) will be employed by the District and be licensed and/or certified by the Commissioner as a classroom teacher, school counselor, school psychologist, school nurse, school social worker, school administrator or supervisor, or Superintendent of Schools. The Building Level DASA Coordinator(s) will be responsible for coordinating and enforcing this policy and regulation in each school building, including but not limited to coordination of:

- professional development for staff members,
- the complaint process, and
- management of the Dignity Act's civility curriculum components.

Contact information for each Building Level Coordinator will be listed in the Code of Conduct, posted on the District's website, posted in schools, available at district and school administrative offices, and either included in the plain-language summary of the Code of Conduct provided to parents before the beginning of the school year or provided to parents once per school year by electronic transmission, mailing or sending the information home with students and will otherwise disseminated in accordance with law.

Adoption date:	June 19, 2012
Revised:	October 15, 2013
Revised:	July 1, 2016
Revised:	December 16, 2019
Revised:	December 19, 2023