

# POLICY

2017

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Students

## **SUBJECT: DIGNITY ACT FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT**

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 bullying, discrimination or harassment, including but not limited to cyberbullying, taunting and intimidation. 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, discrimination and harassment and will foster civility in the schools to prevent and prohibit conduct which is consistent with the district's educational mission.

The district condemns and prohibits all forms of bullying, discrimination and harassment of students based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression, sex, or any other legally protected status 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 act of bullying, discrimination or harassment, outside of school sponsored events, which can create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment where it is foreseeable that the conduct might reach school property may be subject to discipline.

### **Dignity Act Coordinator**

At least one employee at every school building shall be designated as the Dignity Act Coordinator(s). The Dignity Act Coordinator(s) will be thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (identity or expression) and sex. 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.

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.

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## **SUBJECT: DIGNITY ACT FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT (Cont'd)**

### **Training**

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, harassment and discrimination directed at students that are committed by students or school harassment and discrimination directed at students that are committed by students or school employees on school property or at a school function. Training will include ways to promote a supportive school environment that is free from discrimination and harassment, emphasize positive relationships and demonstrate prevention and intervention techniques to assist employees in recognizing and responding to harassment and discrimination, as well as ensuring the safety of the victims.

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 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. Such component shall also include instruction of safe, responsible use of the internet and electronic communications.

Rules against bullying, discrimination and harassment 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 Discrimination and Harassment**

The district will investigate all complaints of bullying, harassment and discrimination, either formal or informal and take prompt corrective measures, as necessary. Complaints will be formal or informal and take prompt corrective measures, as necessary. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with applicable policies and regulations. 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.

### **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, discrimination or harassment 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

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## **SUBJECT: DIGNITY ACT FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT (Cont'd)**

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 bullying, discrimination or harassment.

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

Adopted: 5/21/12  
Revised: 2/27/17