

FACT SHEET

The Dignity for All Students Act

What is The Dignity Act?

The Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) was established with the broad legislative intent to provide a school environment free of discrimination and harassment.

What does New York State Education Department (NYSED) have to do?

- The Commissioner shall promulgate regulations to assist schools in implementing this legislation.
- The Commissioner shall create procedures under which material incidents of discrimination and harassment on school grounds or at a school function are reported to the department on an annual basis.
- The Commissioner shall provide direction which may include development of model policies related to preventing discrimination and harassment.

What does my Board of Education have to do?

- Develop policies intended to create a school environment that is free from discrimination or harassment.
- Develop guidelines for school training programs to discourage discrimination or harassment that are designed to:
 - ▶ Raise awareness and sensitivity of school employees to potential discrimination or harassment and;
 - ▶ To enable employees to prevent and respond to discrimination or harassment.
- Develop guidelines relating to the development of non-discriminatory instructional and counseling methods and require that at least one staff member be trained to handle human relations issues

Who is protected under this legislation?

Identified in the legislation are those who are subjected to intimidation or abuse based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic

group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

Do schools need to provide this information to the public?

A plain language copy of the board approved Code of Conduct must be made available to the public.

How does The Dignity Act define “Harassment?”

Harassment is defined as “creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being;...”

What training will schools have to provide?

School districts will need to develop policies intended to create an environment that is free of discrimination or harassment and to establish guidelines for school training programs.

Why is The Dignity Act necessary?

The Act provides a response to the large number of harassed and stigmatized students skipping school and engaging in high risk behaviors by prohibiting discrimination in public schools and establishing the basis for protective measures such as training and model policies. The Dignity Act takes a major step in creating more nurturing environments in all our schools.

How does The Dignity Act relate to SAVE?

NYSED with the New York State Center for School Safety (NYSCSS) is developing guidance to correlate components of SAVE as they relate to The Dignity Act.

When is The Dignity Act effective?

The Dignity Act becomes effective on July 1, 2012.

Dignity for All Students Act: Frequently Asked Questions

What is The Dignity Act?

The Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) was signed into law by former Governor David A. Paterson in September 2010, to protect all students in New York public schools from harassment, discrimination and bullying by other students or school employees.

When did the Dignity Act become effective?

The Dignity Act became effective on July 1, 2012.

Who is protected under this legislation?

Identified in the legislation are those who are subjected to intimidation or abuse based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. The Act explicitly states that bullying, taunting and intimidation are all forms of harassment.

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What does The Dignity Act require schools to do to meet this new mandate?

- Develop policies intended to create a school environment that is free from discrimination or harassment.
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 - Enable employees to prevent and respond to discrimination or harassment.
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Does Greenburgh North Castle meet these new requirements?

Yes. [One employee in every school building has been designated as a Dignity Act Coordinator](#), and has been trained in methods to respond to human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

How does The Dignity Act relate to SAVE?

The New York State Education Department with the New York State Center for School Safety (NYSCSS) is developing guidance to correlate components of SAVE as they relate to The Dignity Act.

Where can I find more information about the Dignity Act?

Visit the [New York State Education Department](#) website or contact your child's principal for more information.