

DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

9/24/2015



AGENDA

- Review of Current Regulations
- Requirements of the Amended Dignity Act
- Implementation

ORIGINAL LAW

- Chapter 482 of the Laws of 2010 added a new article 2 to Education Law that prohibits discrimination against, and harassments of, students based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex by school employees or other students on school property or at a school sponsored function.

REQUIREMENTS

- Revise Codes of Conduct and adopt policies intended to create a school environment free from harassment and discrimination (COC approved in July, DASA policy approved in August)
- Adopt guidelines to be used in school training programs to raise awareness and sensitivity of school employees to these issues and to enable them to respond appropriately (Olweus and PBIS...will be rolled out at the building level)
- Designate a Dignity Act Coordinator

REQUIREMENTS/REGULATIONS

- Reporting (100.2(kk))
- Dignity Act Coordinator (100.2(jj))
- Instructional Component (100.2(c))
- Code of Conduct and publishing (100.2(l))

MATERIAL INCIDENT

- A single or series of events where a student and/or employee is subjected to discrimination or harassment by a student or employee that creates a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical contact and/or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse, of such severe or pervasive nature that:
 - Has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional and/or physical well being; or
 - Reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her safety.

WHO MANAGES THIS?

- Dignity Act Coordinator
 - Nikki Miller(District Wide)
 - Cathy Hauber (Elementary School)
 - Nick Ganster(Jr.-Sr. High School)

INSTRUCTION

- Instruction in Civility, Citizenship and Character-including tolerance, respect for others and dignity
- Covered by Olweus and PBIS instruction

CODE OF CONDUCT

- Developed with regulations in hand in June with help of staff and parents. Approved by the BOE in July.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Cyberbullying
- Duty of staff to report incidents to building DAC when incidents occur. (Immediately)
- Will be requirement of certification if applying for certification after 7/1/2013.

WHAT IS HARASSMENT/BULLYING UNDER THE DIGNITY ACT?

- The creation of a hostile environment by conduct or threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, 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; or
 - Reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or
 - Reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or
 - Occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property.

WHAT IS HARASSMENT/BULLYING UNDER THE DIGNITY ACT? (CON'T)

- Acts of harassment and bullying shall include, but not be limited to those acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
- For the purposes of this definition the terms 'threats, intimidation or abuse' shall include verbal and non-verbal actions.
- "Cyberbullying" shall mean harassment or bullying as defined above where such harassment or bullying occurs through any form of electronic communication.

REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

- Policies and procedures:
 - Identify employee charged with receiving reports of harassment, bullying and discrimination(DACs)
 - Enable students, parents and staff to make an oral or written report to school staff(website)
 - Require school employees who witness or receive a report of harassment, bullying or discrimination, to promptly orally notify the DAC not later than one school day after and file a written report not later than two school days after making the oral report(website)

REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION (CON'T)

- DAC will lead/conduct thorough investigation of all reports and ensure prompt completion of investigation.
- When investigation reveals verified harassment, bullying or discrimination, take prompt actions reasonably calculated to end harassment, eliminate any hostile environment, create a more positive school culture, prevent recurrence of behavior and ensure the safety of the student(s) against whom harassment was directed.
- Require principal to make regular report on data and trends related to harassment to the superintendent.

REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION (CON'T)

- Go to the District webpage and there is a link in the 'Quick Links' section for the Dignity for All Students.
- Links to forms and other important information

DISCIPLINE

- Development of measured, balanced and age appropriate responses to instances of harassment, bullying or discrimination (CoC)
- Remedies and procedures following a progressive model that makes appropriate use of intervention, discipline and education that vary in method according to:
 - Nature of the behavior
 - Developmental age of the student
 - Student's history of problem behaviors
 - Consistent with district Code of Conduct