

Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)



In September 2010, New York State leaders approved the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) to help ensure that schools have the tools and resources to afford all students an educational environment in which they can thrive. The statewide task force developed guidelines for implementation on July 1, 2012. Additionally the Dignity for All Students Act was amended on July 1, 2013.

The focus is on ensuring that all students attending Smithtown Central School District are in a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying whether in the classroom, on school property, on a school bus and/or at a school function.

About DASA

Q: Who's protected under the Dignity Act?

A: The Dignity Act applies to the protection of all public elementary and secondary school students and prohibits the harassment and discrimination of students by students and by school personnel.

Q: How does the Dignity Act relate to bullying and hazing?

A: Bullying and hazing are forms of harassment and discrimination.

Q: What is bullying?

A: Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An imbalance of power
- Repetition

Q: What physical spaces are covered?

A: The Dignity Act currently applies to behavior on school property (including athletic fields, playgrounds, and parking lots), in school buildings, on a school bus/vehicle, at school-sponsored events or activities, and on the internet.

Q: How does the Dignity Act relate to a school's Code of Conduct?

A: The Code of Conduct reflects the prohibition of discrimination and harassment of students by students or staff.

Q: Does the Dignity Act require any training?

A: Yes. The Dignity Act mandates that schools provide training for all employees to increase awareness and sensitivity to discrimination or harassment and civility in the relations of all people.

Q: What should a student do if they feel they are being harassed or bullied?

A: Speak to one of the following: a teacher, school counselor, social worker, parent, administrator, or a DAC Team Coordinator at your school.

Q: What should a parent do if they feel their child is being harassed or bullied?

A: Print and complete a Harassment and/or Bullying Complaint Form (0115-E). Submit this form to the building principal at your child's school. (This form can be found on the SCSD website under District or Parents/Students then select DASA (Dignity for All Students Act).

Q: What is the process after the building principal receives the completed Harassment and/or Bullying Complaint Form?

A: The complaint is investigated by the building's DAC Team to determine if the complaint is a violation of the Dignity Act. Parent/guardian of alleged targeted student and alleged accused student will be notified, as appropriate, regarding the outcome of the investigation and the action taken to resolve the complaint. Any party not satisfied with the findings of the DAC team may request a District-level investigation (Appeal Process). To start the Appeal Process, parent/guardian must submit a written complaint to the Superintendent.

Helpful Resources

• NYSED Website on DASA

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/>