



# BULKELEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

2019-2020 Dignity for All Students Act  
Sexual Harassment  
Annual Training

# THE DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

- ◉ Enacted into law July 2012
- ◉ The Dignity Act (DASA) protects students from *harassment* and/or *discrimination* based on a person's *actual* or *perceived*:

- Appearance:  
any physically defining characteristic such as color, weight, hair texture, height, etc.
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender: including gender identity or expression
- Sex: (declared at birth)
- Ethnic Group
- Race
- Religious Practice
- Religion
- Disability
- National Origin

# WHAT IS HARASSMENT?

- The creation of a *Hostile Environment* via threats, intimidation, abuse, gossip, dirty looks etc.
  - Does not have to be directed at anyone specific person (ie friends talking at the lunch table amongst themselves)
  - Violators *intention* is not relevant, ie cannot be excused by saying “I was just kidding”
  - Can be verbal or non-verbal
- Any behavior that *unreasonably* and *substantially* interferes with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, mental, emotional, or physical safety

Title IX is the Federal Law that protects ALL individuals from *sexual harassment...*

## WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

There are two categories of sexual harassment:

### *Hostile environment*

- ❑ any unwelcome sexually oriented conduct or atmosphere that is so severe or pervasive that it is intimidating or offensive to a “reasonable person” and interferes with one’s ability to work or receive an education

### *Quid pro quo*

- ❑ the demand for sexual favors in exchange for a benefit: a promotion, an advancement, or a good grade

# Amendment to DASA

**Effective July 1, 2013**

(Chapter 102 Laws of 2012)

## ***Cyberbullying:***

will be defined as *harassment* or *bullying* by any form of **electronic communication**, and **include** incidents **occurring off school property** that create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment.

## **Examples:**

- Deliberate and harmful targeting of another person using electronic technologies such as: cell phones, social media sites, blogs etc.

Cyberbullying includes but is not limited to:

- Sending hurtful, rude, threatening or mean text messages
- Spreading rumors or lies about others by email or on social networks
- Creating websites, videos or social media profiles that embarrass, humiliate, rank or make fun of others
- Impersonation, sexting, stalking

# IDENTIFYING A DIGNITY ACT VIOLATION IN PERSON OR CYBER VIOLATION

- An incident is reported
- The Dignity Act Team reviews reports weekly
- The Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC), thoroughly investigates all complaints
  - In most instances, this means an administrator will interview the complainant, witnesses, and the alleged perpetrator

## IF A VIOLATION HAS OCCURRED...

- ❑ The district must take steps to stop the behavior and continue to monitor the situation
  - ❑ Parent notification
  - ❑ Individual DIGNITY refresher course
  - ❑ Counseling
  - ❑ Detentions
  - ❑ Suspensions
  - ❑ Superintendents hearing

## IF A VIOLATION HAS NOT OCCURRED...

- ❑ Other consequences may apply per the  
*Code of Conduct*

# HOW IS THIS DISCRIMINATION?

- ◉ Denial of equal treatment
- ◉ Denial of access to programs or facilities
- ◉ Inability to access a free and safe educational environment, which is a *Constitutionally Protected Right*

The Dignity Act protects all students from *any form of discrimination*

# REVIEW OF DISTRICT PROCEDURES

- ❑ Students *may* report something they did not personally witness
- ❑ Reports of harassment or discrimination may be made to school officials such as: a teacher, principal, school counselor, any trusted adult in the building or the Title IX officers
- ❑ Persons involved in the report *may* request an interviewer of the same sex
- ❑ Reports *may* be made anonymously
  - Tip Line- on [Rhinebeckcsd.org](http://Rhinebeckcsd.org)

# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Understand** the Dignity Act and how it is in place to protect ALL students
- **Report** possible Dignity Act violations
- **Act** in a respectful and positive way to all members of the school community