

A. PURPOSE

1. The Town of Webb Union Free School District Board recognizes that acts of discrimination and harassment, including bullying, taunting, or intimidation, are detrimental to student learning and achievement. These behaviors interfere with the mission of the District to educate its students and disrupt the operation of its schools. Such behavior affects not only the students who are its targets, but also those individuals who participate in, and witness such acts.
2. To this end, the Board condemns and strictly prohibits all forms of discrimination and harassment, including bullying, taunting or intimidation, against students by students and/or employees on school property, which includes (among other things) school buses, and at school functions, which means school-sponsored, extra-curricular events or activities.
3. The goal of the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) is to create a safe and supportive school climate where students can learn and focus, rather than fear being discriminated against, intimidated, taunted, harassed, or bullied.
4. DASA prohibits acts of harassment and bullying, including cyberbullying and/or discrimination, by employees or students on school property, a school function, and off premise misconduct based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientations or gender (defined to include gender identity and expression), or sex.

B. DIGNITY ACT COORDINATOR

1. At least one (1) employee shall be designated as the Dignity Act Coordinator. The Dignity Act Coordinators are expected to:
 - a. Promote a safe, orderly, and academically stimulating environment supporting active teaching and learning for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
 - b. Identify curricular resources that support infusing civility in classroom instruction and classroom management and provide guidance to employees as to how to access and implement those resources.
 - c. Be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of Board Policies and regulations regarding the Dignity for all Students Act.
 - d. Address issues of harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any District student on District Property or at a District Function, or off District Property when the actions create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the District environment or where it is foreseeable that the conduct might reach District Property.
 - e. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students.

C. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

1. The District will respond to cyberbullying that happens on school property or at a school function; or happens off school property but creates a substantial disruption to the learning environment or when the threats, intimidation, or abuse impact (or could impact) the school environment.
2. Any person who experiences, witnesses, or is told about bullying/discrimination can make a report.
3. The District employees are required to report any bullying/discrimination they witness or are told about.
4. Students who have been subjected to discrimination or harassment, parents whose children have been subjected to such behavior, or other students or staff who observe such behavior, are encouraged and expected to make verbal and/or written complaints to the appropriate and/or designated school personnel in accordance with the training and guidelines provided and the relevant provisions of the District's Code of Conduct and its disciplinary rules and procedures.
5. At all times, complaints will be documented, tracked and handled in accordance with the regulations and procedures accompanying this policy or if applicable, policies related to nondiscrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment policies and the District's Code of Conduct, its disciplinary rules and procedures. If a staff person is unsure of the reporting procedure, he or she is expected to inquire about how to proceed by speaking with his or her supervisor.
6. There shall be a duty for all school personnel to report incidents of student-to-student and/or staff-to-student discrimination, harassment and bullying that they observe on school property or at school functions to their building principal or other administrator who supervises their employment. In addition, there shall be a further duty for all school personnel to report any incidents of student-to-student and/or staff-to-student discrimination, harassment and bullying of which they are made aware by students, staff, or persons in parental relation to their building principals or other administrator who supervises their employment. Supervisors may choose to refer the information to appropriate staff, which may include, among others, the Dignity Act Coordinator, for investigation.
7. The District will take prompt actions reasonably calculated to end harassment, bullying or discrimination, eliminating any hostile environment, and ensuring the safety of the student(s) toward whom harassment, bullying or discrimination was directed.
8. A report of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination shall be made and include, but not limited to the following:
 - a report regarding the denial of access to school facilities including, but not limited to, restrooms, changing rooms, locker rooms, and/or field trips, based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (which includes gender identity and/or expression), or sex; or

- a report regarding application of a dress code, specific grooming or appearance standards that is based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (which includes gender identity and/or expression), or sex; or
 - a report regarding the use of name(s) and pronoun(s) or the pronunciation of name(s) that is based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (which includes gender identity and/or expression), or sex; or
 - a report regarding any other form of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination, based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (which includes gender identity and/or expression), or sex.
9. The results of any such investigation shall be reported to both the targeted student and the alleged offender, as well as their respective parents or guardians, in accordance with the policy and/or the District's Code of Conduct, its disciplinary rules and procedures. If either party and/or their respective parents or guardians disagrees with the results of the investigation, that party should be advised of how to proceed in such instances.

D. STUDENT DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES/REMEDATION

1. While the primary focus of this policy is on prevention, acts of discrimination, harassment and bullying may still occur. When such acts occur, student offenders will be given the clear message that their actions are inappropriate and will not be tolerated because they are inconsistent with the concepts of tolerance and respect for others and the fostering of civility at the District in order to provide a safe and supportive school environment for all students.
2. Student offenders will be advised that their behavior must improve. Student offenders will receive in-school guidance on making positive choices in their relationships with others. If appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken by the administration in accordance with the District's Code of Conduct and its disciplinary rules and procedures. If the behavior rises to the level of criminal activity, law enforcement will be contacted.
3. This policy is meant to promote progressive discipline and intervention, as opposed to a "zero tolerance" approach. Responses to students' violations of the policy shall be age-appropriate and include both consequences and appropriate remedial responses to a student who commits one or more acts of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying.
4. Consequences for a student who commits an act or acts of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, the student's history of problem behaviors, and must be consistent with the District's Code of Conduct and its disciplinary rules and procedures.

E. INVESTIGATING AND RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF STAFF-TO-STUDENT HARASSMENT AND/OR DISCRIMINATION

1. In the case of a report of alleged staff-to-student harassment and/or discrimination, reporting, investigation, and response must follow all applicable District policies and procedures, including contractual provisions and due process obligations related to staff-to-student misconduct.

F. NON-RETALIATION

1. Any person having reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been subjected to discrimination or harassment by a student and/or an employee, on school grounds or at school functions, who, acting reasonably and in good faith, either reports such information to school officials, to the Commissioner, or to law enforcement authorities or otherwise initiates, testifies, participates or assists in any formal or informal proceedings, will have immunity from any civil liability that may arise from the making of such a report or from initiating, testifying, participating or assisting in such formal or informal proceedings.
2. The District and their respective employees are prohibited from taking, requesting or causing a retaliatory action against any such person, who, acting reasonably and in good faith, either makes such a report or initiates, testifies, participates or assists in such formal or informal proceedings (Education Law §16).

G. DISSEMINATION, MONITORING, REVIEW, AND REPORTING

1. The District, will post their complete Code of Conduct and this policy, including any updates on their website.
2. Each year, as a part of the required annual review of the Code of Conduct, this policy may be reviewed to assess its effectiveness and compliance with state and federal law.
3. In addition, the Board will receive the annual report prepared as part of the State Education Department's implementation of the Dignity for all Student Act and Violent or Disruptive Incident Report, or its equivalent, with particular attention to the incidents of, discrimination, harassment, bullying, and cyberbullying.
4. The Superintendent shall create regulations aimed at implementing this policy.

H. TRAINING

1. The Board recognizes that professional development is needed in order to implement an effective discrimination, harassment, and bullying prevention and intervention program.
2. The Superintendent and/or his/her designee will incorporate training to support this program in new teacher orientation and the annual professional development plan, as needed.
3. Training opportunities will be provided for all staff who have contact with students.

Note: Refer to Town of Webb Union Free School District 505.00 Code of Conduct

Approved: Board of Education
Date: June 19, 2012
Revised: January 22, 2019