

Frequently Asked Questions about Dignity for All Students Act:

Q: Who's protected under the Dignity Act?

A: The 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 DASA relate to bullying & hazing?

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

Q: What physical spaces are covered?

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

Q: Do anti-bullying programs exist at ICSD?

A: Yes, ICSD has many excellent programs in place that address the prevention of harassment, discrimination and bullying. The requirements of DASA would support and enhance the existence of these programs. DASA would provide structures for even more comprehensive and consistent training and intervention to build a caring school climate in all buildings.

Q: What should I do if a student is being bullied, is bullying others or has witnessed bullying?

A: Contact the DASA Coordinator in your building or complete a bully reporting form which can be downloaded from the district website.

Q: Does DASA require any training?

A: Yes. The DASA 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.

In Accordance with the DASA Mandates, ICSD has:

- ◆ Revised and adopted Policies intended to create a school environment free from harassment and discrimination;
- ◆ Created plain language versions for both elementary and secondary Codes of Conduct;
- ◆ Coordinated with TST BOCES Youth Development to train all staff to raise awareness and sensitivity to these issues and provided tools for appropriate responses to harmful incidents;
- ◆ Developed a system for reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment;
- ◆ Designated a Dignity Act Coordinator who is responsible for receiving and investigating reports of discrimination and harassment in each school;
- ◆ Designated an administrator to coordinate all district-wide DASA efforts and initiatives;
- ◆ Created a DASA website which will be a direct link from the ICSD home page; and
- ◆ Established a communication committee which will work to educate the entire ICSD community.

ICSD also plans to:

- ◆ Work proactively with our students to create a culture which values "upstanders" - those who will step up and speak out when an incident occurs and
- ◆ Share updates on trainings and initiatives in future editions of *The Insider*.

Dignity for All Students Act

A Guide for Parents and Caregivers

The Ithaca City School District is committed to creating a safe and caring learning environment where all students can succeed.

Research indicates that there is a direct link between success in school and the school learning environment. Students are more likely to achieve their full potential in schools that have a positive school culture and an environment in which students feel safe and supported.

In July of 2012, NYS leaders implemented the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) which reads: **It is hereby declared to be a policy of the State to afford all students in public schools an environment free of discrimination and harassment. The purpose of this article is to foster civility in public schools and to prevent and prohibit conduct which is inconsistent with the school's educational mission. No student shall be subjected to harassment by school employees or students on school property or at a school function; nor shall any student be subjected to discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.**

DASA Protocol at ICSD:

Student, staff member or parent/caregiver experiences, witnesses or hears about bullying, harassment, discrimination or hazing.

Witness or target finds a staff person if immediate help is needed AND if a safety issue, alleged antagonist(s) are separated and intervention occurs to ensure safety.

Bullying Reporting Form is completed by student, staff, or parent/caregiver and given to the Dignity Act Coordinator listed in the chart on the right.

Investigation occurs. Target is interviewed separately from antagonist and necessary supports are put into place to ensure safety. Witnesses and antagonist(s) are interviewed.

Parent/caregiver is notified. Notification may occur earlier dependent upon severity and situation. If investigation deems that the event occurred, then every attempt is made to permanently stop the bullying, harassment, discrimination or hazing by means of consequences, education, restorative practices and/or remediation. By law, the consequences to the antagonist cannot be shared with the target without express written consent of antagonist and parent/caregiver.

Building	Dignity Act Coordinator	Contact Information
Alternate Community School	D. Carruthers	274-2183
Belle Sherman	D. Breiman	274-2206
Beverly J. Martin	S. Eschbach	274-2209
Boynton Middle School	J. Tomasik	274-2241
Caroline	M. Grover	539-7155
Cayuga Heights	B. Pollack	257-8557
DeWitt Middle School	M. Knight	257-3222
Enfield	L. Rieger	274-2221
Fall Creek	M. Simons	274-2214
Ithaca High School	J. Trumble	274-2257
Northeast	L. Talcott	257-2121
South Hill	S. Little	274-2129
Additional Support:		
Ithaca City School District	A. Verba	274-2121
TST BOCES Youth Development	J. Astles	257-1551

DASA Documents and the Bullying Reporting Form can be found at:
www.ithacaschools.org