

# AVERILL PARK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

The intent of the New York State Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) is to ensure that elementary and secondary school students have the right to attend school in an environment that is free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. DASA takes effect on July 1, 2012.

DASA regulations are consistent with Averill Park Board of Education Regulations 5300, 5300.66

DASA requires that at least one person at every school be thoroughly trained to handle harassing behaviors that may be related but not limited to a person's actual or perceived: race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. The designated school professionals who will be trained to act as Anti-Bullying Coordinator for Averill Park Central School District are:

- Elementary Level- School Counselors/School Principal/PE Teachers
- Middle School Level- School Counselors/School Principal/PE Teachers
- High School Level- Assistant Principal/School Principal/PE Teachers



### KEY DEFINITIONS FROM DASA

**Harassment:** The creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse 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 conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. The harassing behavior may be based on any characteristic, including but not limited to a person's actual or perceived: race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression).

**Discrimination:** The act of denying rights, benefits, justice, equitable treatment or access to facilities available to all others, to an individual or group of people because of the group, class or category to which that person belongs (as enumerated in the *harassment* section).

**Bullying:** A hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression and/or creates terror. Bullying may be premeditated or a sudden activity.

**Bullying often includes the following characteristics:**

Power imbalance- occurs when a bully uses his/her physical or social power over a target.

Intent to harm- the bully seeks to inflict physical or emotional harm and or/takes pleasure in this activity.

Threat of further aggression- the bully and target believe that bullying will continue.

Terror- When any bullying increases it becomes a systematic violence or harassment used to intimidate and maintain dominance.

**There are several types of bullying:**

Verbal bullying can include name calling, insulting remarks, verbal teasing, frightening phone calls, violent threats, gossip, taunting, spreading rumors, racial slurs, threatening electronic communications (cyberbullying), anonymous notes

Physical bullying can include poking, slapping, hitting, tripping or causing a fall, choking, kicking, punching, biting, twisting arms of legs, pinching, spitting, scratching, damaging clothes and personal property, or threatening gestures

Social/Relational bullying includes excluding someone from a group, isolating, shunning, spreading rumors or gossiping

**Hazing:** An induction, initiation or membership process involving harassment which produces public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule or creates a situation where public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule is likely to occur.

**What are our role/responsibilities-** Prevention / Intervention / Training / Reporting and Investigating by the Dignity Act Coordinator as determined by New York State Education Regulation and Dignity for All Students Act

**How is information being disseminated-** District Goals / District Character Education Committee / Staff / Faculty Meetings / Building Level Committees / Website / SIS Messages to Parents/ PTA

This initiative is supported by the District's Character Education Committee and Dignity for All Students Committee.

Please contact your building representative for more information