

BCSD Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be difficult to distinguish from normal conflict. However, the definition of bullying contains three critical research supported components:

- Intentional
- Imbalance of Power
- Repeated

District Definition: Bullying shall mean any negative behavior that is intentional, **repeated, involves an imbalance of power**, and is directed at a student by another student or group of students, or by a staff member, which meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. Causes foreseeable physical harm to the student, or causes the student to reasonably fear such harm;
2. Causes foreseeable emotional harm to the student that is unreasonable or malicious;
3. Causes damage to or the loss of the student's property;
4. Discriminates against the student on the basis of his or her race, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or economic status;
5. Creates an objectively intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with the student's educational opportunities and experiences; or
6. Includes, but is not limited to, the misuse of technology whereby harassing, intimidating, threatening, terrorizing, or sexual messages are sent or posted via such electronic means as email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, website and blog postings, and social networking sites.

Includes any actions that take place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or that take place off of school grounds but that is designed to or has the effect of interfering with a student's ability to attend school and/or to be educated in a safe, non-hostile environment.

Bullying Basics:

- ⇒ All faculty and staff members are expected to intervene and respond to allegations and incidents of bullying. For guidance on how to respond please see your building administrator.
- ⇒ Do not minimize an allegation of bullying.

**"If you SEE or KNOW something,
SAY something."**

Definition of Bullying by Grade

Grades K-2:

Bullying is when someone is mean over and over again and hurts other people on purpose with their words and/or action. Bullying can be:

- ⇒ **Words:** name calling, making fun of, laughing at, threatening, using a certain tone of voice, spreading rumors.
- ⇒ **Actions:** pushing, shoving, hitting, spitting, kicking, hair pulling, eye rolling, body language, mean gestures, excluding someone, ruining someone's belongings, drawing mean pictures.

Grades 3-5:

Bullying is negative behavior that is intentional (on purpose), repeated (over and over again), and involves an imbalance of power or strength. (I/R: Intentional, Imbalance of power, Repeated). Bullying can be:

- ⇒ **Physical:** pushing, shoving, hitting, spitting, kicking, hair pulling
- ⇒ **Verbal:** name calling, making fun of, laughing at, threatening, using a certain tone of voice
- ⇒ **Nonverbal:** eye rolling, body language, mean gestures, drawing mean pictures
- ⇒ **Emotional/relational:** excluding someone, spreading rumors
- ⇒ **Cyber bullying:** sending mean messages by text or email
- ⇒ **Personal Property:** damaging, destroying, or loss of someone else's property

Grades 6-12:

Bullying is negative behavior that is intentional (on purpose), repeated (over and over again), and involves an imbalance of power or strength. (I/R: Intentional, Imbalance of power, Repeated). Bullying is unfair and one sided. Bullying can be:

- ⇒ **Physical:** pushing, shoving, hitting, spitting, kicking, hair pulling
- ⇒ **Verbal:** name calling, making fun of, laughing at, threatening, using a certain tone of voice
- ⇒ **Nonverbal:** eye rolling, body language, mean gestures, drawing mean pictures
- ⇒ **Emotional/relational:** excluding someone, spreading rumors
- ⇒ **Cyber bullying:** sending mean messages by text or email
- ⇒ **Personal Property:** damaging, destroying, or loss of someone else's property

Discrimination is a type of bullying that may be physical, verbal, nonverbal or cyber bullying and could be about race, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, physical appearance, or economic status.

BEDFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Inspiring and Challenging Our Students



Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act)

2022-2023

Law Enacted: July 1, 2012

Amended: July 1, 2013

**Want More
Information?**

Visit the Pupil Personnel Department at

www.bcsdny.org/Page/228

For questions, email

eescobar3312@bcsdny.org

Dignity Act Building Liaisons

DISTRICT COORDINATOR: DR. EDWARD ESCOBAR

BUILDING LIAISONS

FOX LANE HIGH SCHOOL

BRETT MILLER
ANA PIQUERO
JASON SPECTOR
KRISTY EMERY

FOX LANE MIDDLE SCHOOL

MARY HARRISON
AMANDA GERBER
KEVIN HANLON
TIMOTHY MONTALVO

BEDFORD HILLS ELEMENTARY

ZBYNEK GOLD
BETH KOLB
JACQUELINE SALCITO

BEDFORD VILLAGE ELEMENTARY

GINA SMITH
JENA BLECHMAN

MOUNT KISCO ELEMENTARY

INAS MORSI-HOGANS
ANGELIQUE JOHNSON
JENNIFER CORCORAN
JULIE AUSTIN

POUND RIDGE ELEMENTARY

STEPHANIE BELL
JESSICA STERN

WEST PATENT ELEMENTARY

JUDY BREWSTER
DENISE CONNOLLY

The Dignity Act

What does it include?

§ 12. Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited

- No student shall be subjected to harassment by employees OR students on school property or at a school-sponsored 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 identity, or sex by school employees or students on school property or at a school sponsored function.
- An age-appropriate version of the policy written in plain language shall be included in the code of conduct.

Who has to do what?

§ 13. Policies and Guidelines

The Board of Education shall create policies and guidelines that shall include, but not be limited to:

Requirements

- Guidelines relating to the development of nondiscriminatory instructional and counseling methods.
- Requirements that at least one staff member at every school be thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of: Race, Color, National Origin, Weight, Ethnic Group, Religion, Religious Practice, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Sex, Disability.

School Staff

- Policies to create a school environment free from discrimination or harassment
- Guidelines to be used in school training programs to raise the awareness and sensitivity of school employees to potential discrimination or harassment.
- Guidelines to enable employees to prevent and respond to discrimination and harassment.

Student Instruction

- Education Law §801-a – Instruction in Civility, Citizenship and Character Education.
- Grades K-12
- Honesty, tolerance, personal responsibility, respect for others, observance of laws, courtesy, dignity.
- Tolerance, respect for others, and dignity include awareness and sensitivity to discrimination or harassment and civility in relations of people of different: Races, weights, national origins, ethnic groups, religions, religious practices, mental or physical abilities, sexual orientations, gender identity, sexes.

What do I do if I encounter bullying?

Faculty/Staff: Fill out the form tell your administrator

Students: Tell an adult in School

Parents: Tell a counselor and/or administrator

The Dignity Act Cont'd

Amendment to the Dignity Act Effective July 1, 2013

Cyberbullying: will be defined as harassment or bullying by any forms 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.

The Principal/Dignity Act Coordinators per Building: will be responsible for receiving Reports of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination, Investigation of Reports, Response to Verified Reports, Notification of Law Enforcement if criminal conduct is suspected, Provide Curriculum to include instruction in safe and responsible use of the Internet and electronic communications and emphasize discouraging acts of harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Employee Reporting: School employees who witness or receive a report of harassment, bullying or discrimination must notify the principal within one school day after witnessing the incident or receiving the report and must file a written report within two school days thereafter.

Guidance and Educational Materials: The State Education Department will provide guidance and educational materials, including best practices in addressing cyberbullying, and best practices in helping families and communities to work cooperatively with schools in



Q: Who is protected by the Dignity Act?

A: All public elementary and secondary school students.

Q: What does the Dignity Act prohibit?

A: Harassment and discrimination of students by students and 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 physical spaces are covered by the Dignity Act?

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, as well as at school-sponsored events or activities.

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

A: The Code of Conduct must be amended to reflect the prohibition of discrimination and harassment of students by students or staff – age appropriate plain language.