



LEVITTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Levittown Memorial Education Center
150 Abbey Lane
Levittown, NY 11756



Debbie Rifkin
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
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September, 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In 2010, New York State passed the *Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)*. This law went into effect on July 1, 2012 and protects students from harassment, discrimination and bullying by other students or school employees. It stipulates that no student shall be subjected to discrimination based on his or her *actual or perceived* race, color, national origin, ethnic group, gender identity, or biological sex. DASA explicitly states that bullying, taunting, and intimidation on the protected grounds listed above are all forms of harassment; however, it is not limited to those categories.

Harassment under DASA is defined as the “creation of a hostile environment by conduct or verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s education performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being...”

Bullying under DASA is defined as “hostile activity which harms or induces fear through threat of further aggression and/or creates terror”. Bullying may be subtle or easy to identify, done by one person or a group. Bullying often includes a real or perceived power imbalance, intent to harm, threat of further aggression.

Cyberbullying under DASA is defined as “the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person”. Examples of cyberbullying include; mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

In response to this new law, and following the recommendation of the NYS School Boards Association, Levittown Public Schools reviewed its policies related to student conduct and social-emotional learning. All necessary updates were made and subsequently approved by the Board of Education. These updates are now included in the Board Policies as well as the Code of Conduct for students and include complaint forms, all of which can be found on the school website on the Board of Education page. The District will continue to review its policies to ensure that the most stringent procedures are in place to deal with these issues.

Dignity Act Coordinators have been appointed in each building. They are the building principal and social workers, who have been specially trained. The process for filing a concern is available on the school website or can be picked up in the main office of your school. Every reported incident of bullying should be recorded and documented.

Dignity Act Training has been given to all employees and will continue throughout the school year. The District will continue to deliver its curriculum to promote civility and citizenship, and as is always the case, a partnership between home and school is essential.

Please continue to visit the school website at www.levittownschools.com and follow the instructions for continuously updated information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Rifkin', written in a cursive style.

Debbie Rifkin

Civil Rights Compliance Officer