

# Dignity for All Students Act

Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda UFSD



# Dignity Act

◦ States that **NO** student shall be subjected to harassment or discrimination by employees or students on school property, at a school function and that may occur outside school property based on their **actual** or **perceived**:

- ❖ Race
- ❖ Color
- ❖ Weight
- ❖ National Origin
- ❖ Ethnic Group
- ❖ Religion
- ❖ Religious Practice
- ❖ Disability
- ❖ Sexual Orientation
- ❖ Gender
- ❖ Sex



# **Bullying ~ Cyber Bullying ~ Intimidation Verbal Threats ~ Harassing Conduct Abuse ~ Inappropriate Touching**

This can done through communicating by any means including:

- ❖ Oral
- ❖ Written
- ❖ Electronic Devices



On or off school property, where the content of such communication can reasonably be interpreted as a threat to commit an act of violence on school property; or results in material or substantial disruption to the educational environment.

# DASA Goal

The goal of the **Dignity Act** is to create a safe and supportive school climate where students can learn and focus, rather than fear being discriminated against and/or verbally and/or physically harassed.



# What is Bullying?

- ❖ Acts of aggression **intended** to cause harm (verbal, physical, relational or cyber)
- ❖ By a peer/group of peers or adult operating from a position of strength or **power**
- ❖ Usually **repeated**, or has the potential to be repeated, over time



# How is Bullying Different from Conflict or Play?



**Conflict:** A struggle, dispute or misunderstanding between two equal forces

**Playing:** A mutually desirable interaction (positive affect, give-and-take) rough, tumble and playing that many often mistake for aggression and bullying



# Students Most Likely to Be Bullied

Some research suggests that students are most likely to be bullied because of perceived differences, such as:

- ❖ Appearance or body size
- ❖ Perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender
- ❖ Degree of masculinity or femininity
- ❖ Performance in school
- ❖ Race, ethnicity, national origin and /or religion
- ❖ Low-income household
- ❖ Youth with disabilities and other special health needs

# Common Myths About Students Who Bully

- ❖ Students who bully are loners
- ❖ Students who bully have low self-esteem and are insecure
- ❖ Students bully others because they want attention
- ❖ Bullying behavior is a normal part of children being children
- ❖ Only boys bully others





# Possible Indicators of Students Who Are Being Bullied

- ❖ Physical signs like torn, damaged or soiled clothing; unexplained cuts, bruises and scratches; missing or damaged personal items like books or homework without a credible explanation
- ❖ Socially isolated
- ❖ Become truant or have frequent claims of physical ailments in order to be allowed to go home
- ❖ Begin doing poorly in school, receiving declining grades

# Harassment

- ❖ Generally defined as conduct which annoys, threatens, intimidates, alarms or puts a person in fear of safety
- ❖ Unwanted, unwelcomed and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment



# Types of Bullying & Harassment

## ❖ Physical Bullying

~ Punching, shoving, acts that hurt people

## ❖ Verbal Bullying

~ Name calling, making offensive remarks

## ❖ Indirect Bullying (similar to relational aggression)

~ Spreading rumors, excluding, ganging up

## ❖ Cyber Bullying

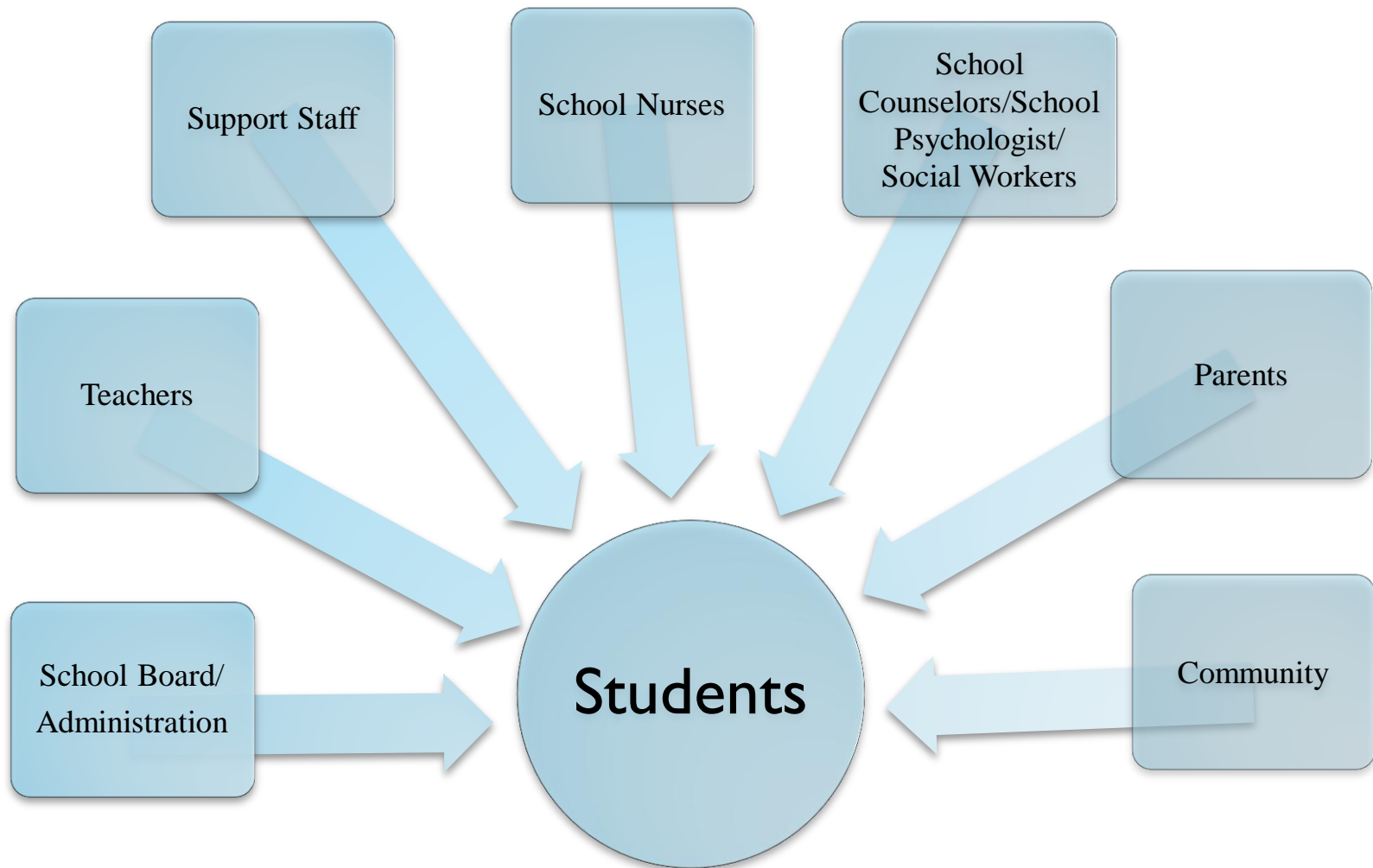
~ Sending insulting messages or threats by e-mail, text messaging or social networking

## ❖ Harassment

~ Can be verbal, nonverbal, physical or electronic aggression, intimidation or hostility



# Who is involved in Bullying Prevention in our Schools?



# Increase Awareness & Supervision

- ❖ Be Present and Positive
  - Greet students by name
  - Be models of dignity and respect
- ❖ Acknowledge and Reward Desired Behavior
- ❖ Arrange for Active Supervision in “Hot Spots”  
(hallway, lunch, recess, before school)



# Staff Responsibilities

**If you see an incident or a student comes to you to discuss an incident related to bullying or harassment by an employee or student it is your responsibility to do the following:**

- ❖ Gather facts from the alleged victim
- ❖ Touch base with the Dignity Act Coordinator and Administration
  - Discuss the incident with the DAC to provide support for reporting the DASA incident
- ❖ Document the incident utilizing the district report form (new regulated mandate)

# Administrative Responsibilities

**Investigations may involve selected school personnel based on their knowledge and experience of investigative techniques:**

- ❖ Use a continuum of consequences and interventions
  - Written apology if sincere, education/counseling, loss of privilege, detention, lunch detention, in-school suspensions, out of school suspension, increased supervision, parent contact, coordination with law enforcement or mental health service
- ❖ Report the incident to the alleged victim's parents and the offender(s) parents
  - Keep the parents informed, get them involved and keep them aware of future incidents
- ❖ Follow-up privately with the alleged victim to provide support and assess needs – document the follow-up on the report form
- ❖ Once the report form is completed hand it in to the DAC to sign-off on the report and for tracking purposes

# Involve Parents as Partners

- ❖ Work with parents proactively
- ❖ Communicating about an incident
  - Be timely with communication
  - Focus on the behavior (not the person)
  - Avoid blaming or judging (expect denial)
  - Emphasize how this type of behavior can be a problem for their child, the other person and the school environment
  - Inform the parent about school response
  - Work together to help the child behave in other ways
  - Provide outside resources – Family Support Center





# Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District

## Dignity for All Students Act

### Report Form

**PERSON REPORTING INCIDENT** (Please print)

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Relationship to Alleged Victim:</b>	<b>Did you witness the incident?</b>
<b>Today's Date:</b>	<b>Time(s) of Incident:</b>
<b>Date(s) of Incident:</b>	

**Name of Alleged Victim:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Out of District School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name(s) of Alleged Offender(s):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Name(s) of Witness(es):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Age:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Basis of Complaint:**

Race  Color  Weight  National Origin  Ethnic Group  Religion

Religious Practice  Disability  Gender  Sex  Sexual Orientation

Other (Please briefly explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**Where did the incident happen? Choose all that apply:**

Classroom  Playground/Recess  Cafeteria  Bus  Library  Locker Room

Lavatory  Hallway/Stairwell  On the Way To/From School  Electronically/Cyberspace

On School Property  Off School Property  School Sponsored Function

What did the alleged offender(s) say or do? Explain in the space provided.

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Did a physical injury result from this incident?

No     Yes (no medical attention needed)     Yes (medical attention needed)

Evaluation Done by School Nurse     Other Medical Intervention

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any additional information you would like to provide?

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(This report may be done anonymously, but doing so may limit the follow-up that can occur)

Administrator / School Counselor:

Describe the Remedy, Outcome or Resolution: (Include Interventions)

Alleged Victim:

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Offender(s):

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**When in Doubt  
Contact Your DAC!**

