

DASA Overview

In its simplest form, DASA is intended to afford all students in public schools an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying in all its forms including taunting and intimidation and by any means including internet or other digital communications or media. The legislation presumes that students' ability to learn and meet high academic standards, as well as the schools' ability to educate its students are significantly compromised if these types of incidents are allowed to occur.

Where Does DASA Apply?

It applies not only within the school building but on school grounds, at athletic events, and on school buses. DASA also applies not only during the instructional day at school, but also when before and after school activities are conducted, at extra-curricular events and activities, sporting events, field trips, as well as at any off-campus school sponsored event.

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination refers to unfair and unequal treatment of an individual or group. Discrimination in public schools is prohibited in all its forms. It is particularly a sensitive issue for individuals (students or staff members) if they are a "protected class" under the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) due to their race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation. DASA regulations included actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

What is Bullying and Harassment?

Bullying and harassment refers to any act or action that creates a hostile environment by conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse, whether verbal or non-verbal in nature, including cyberbullying. It also includes:

- Any conduct that has the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits or mental, emotional or physical well-being, and/or
- Any conduct or behavior which would reasonably cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety, cause physical injury or emotional harm, and/or
- Any conduct or behavior that occurs off of school property, but would create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, such as cyberbullying*.

*Cyberbullying is defined as harassment or bullying by any form of electronic communication, and includes incidents occurring off school property that create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment.

How are Complaints Handled?

DASA requires that all complaints be acted on in a timely manner, investigated promptly, documented and reported. DASA also requires that appropriate action be taken to protect the targeted student, discipline the offender(s) as well as protect any witness or reporter of an incident from retaliation.

What are Examples of Discriminatory, Bullying and/Harassment Behaviors or Conduct?

- physical behavior such as hitting & touching • damaging property or belongings
- stealing, extortion or threatening to extort • taunting or name calling
- teasing or insulting • making crude comments
- spreading rumors or gossip • threats, stalking, harassment
- use of peer pressure • shunning or excluding
- graphic written statements

- use of cell phone or internet and conduct which may be physically threatening, harmful or humiliating
- getting others to join in the inappropriate behaviors listed above



Other Provisions of DASA

Dignity Act Coordinator: One staff member at every school must be designated and trained to handle human relations in the areas of: race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and sex.

School	DASA Coordinator	Contact Information
Central School	Karen Ruzzo	kruzzo@mamkschools.org 914-220-3401 (main office)
Chatsworth Avenue School	Sandra Zadrima	szadrima@mamkschools.org 914-220-3501 (main office)
Mamaroneck Avenue School	Neill Alleva	nalleva@mamkschools.org 914-220-3601 (main office)
Murray Avenue School	Colleen Melnyk	cmelnyk@mamkschools.org 914-220-3701 (main office)
Hommocks Middle School	Emily Macias-Capellan	emaciascapellan@mamkschools.org 914-220-3301 (main office)
Mamaroneck High School	Jenny Rodriguez	jrodriguez@mamkschools.org 914-220-3213 (Asst. Principal Office)
Dignity Coordinator	Carol Priore	cpriore@mamkschools.org 914-220-3020 (Personnel Office)

Employee Training: All district employees receive yearly mandated training to raise awareness and sensitivity to potential acts of discrimination and/or harassment and to enable employees to prevent and respond to incidents of discrimination and harassment.

Resources:

StopBullying.gov , US Department of Education, includes resources for kids, teens, young adults, parents, educators, and community, [webisodes](#)  for kids, guidance, and much more

[Dignity For All Students Act Guidance](#)